

# Representations of American Exceptionalism

*The Exceptionalist Rhetoric of Ron Paul and Mitt Romney*

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Any mistakes in this thesis are exclusively my own.

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## **1. Introduction**

Nations are communities bound together by factors such as history, religion, shared experiences and values, and a nation's foreign policy will necessarily reflect these factors (Cooper 2003:136). The United States of America is a nation with a unique and relatively short history where the populace is bound together, not by a shared ethnicity, but by a shared belief in a particular way of life. Entrenched in this way of life is the belief in American exceptionalism. American exceptionalism is important for understanding American society and American foreign policy because it "has become a public myth that provides a philosophical foundation for debates on specific policies, including US foreign policy" (Davis & Lynn-Jones 1987:23). Michael Kammen (1993:8) notes: "American exceptionalism is as old as the nation itself and, equally important, has played an integral part of the society's sense of its own identity". Harold Honggju Koh (2005:112) elaborates on American exceptionalism's unique standing in American politics, stating:

In American political life, the concept flows through the rhetoric of nearly every American president, from Washington's Farewell Address, to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, to Reagan's image of "a shining city on the hill," to nearly every post-September 11 speech of George W. Bush

Although the assumptions inherent in American exceptionalism have been frequently challenged by the realities of history, such as the American Civil War, the Great Depression and the Vietnam War, they have proved to be remarkably resilient (McCriskin 2003:184). In the words of David Weiss and Jason A. Edwards (2011:1-2) the "rhetoric of American exceptionalism permeates every period of American history".

According to Jason A. Edwards (2011c: 255) "arguments made about the U.S. role in the world are largely structured by its exceptionalist tradition". In this thesis I will explore the importance of American exceptionalism as a collective national identity. Specifically I will analyze Republican president candidates Ron Paul and Mitt Romney's rhetoric in the context of the 2012 presidential elections, showing how different representations of American exceptionalism are used to justify different foreign policy stances.



My research question will thus be:

*How is foreign policy legitimized through American exceptionalism in Ron Paul and Mitt Romney's rhetoric?*

I will lean on Augoustinos et al.'s (2002:106) view of texts as social practices, analyzing Ron Paul's speech announcing his candidacy for the 2012 Republican primaries and Romney's speech on foreign policy at the Citadel Military College, with the aim of uncovering the linguistic traits and rhetorical mechanisms constructing the world view legitimizing their respective foreign policies. Exceptionalism will thus serve as the theoretical foundation for a discussion regarding Paul and Romney's foreign policy rhetoric. I will analyze how Romney and Paul, despite pertaining to polar opposite strands of foreign policy, both frame their policies within the discourse of American exceptionalism. This thesis is thus an endeavor to investigate the use and construction of national identity in the legitimization of American foreign policy. To discern the differences in representation of American exceptionalism between the two candidates I have conducted a rhetorical analysis of two speeches made by the candidates.

### **1.1 Outline of Thesis**

In this section I will give an outline of the structure of the thesis. In **chapter 2** I give a brief outline of the context of 2012 elections. In **chapter 3** I outline the epistemological and philosophical foundations of the study, highlighting the concepts of constructivism and discourse. Furthermore I give an overview of the applied method, illuminating the merits of Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA), as well as addressing issues concerning validity, reliability and selection of material. In **chapter 4** I account for some of the relevant terms and concepts of the thesis. In **chapter 5** I give an overview of the theoretical framework for the analysis. I illuminate the main tenants of American *exceptionalism*, highlighting the contributions of influential scholars in the field and discussing the contemporary debate concerning what American *exceptionalism* entails. **Chapter 6** encompasses an account of the analysis

of Paul and Romney's respective speeches using RPA. **Chapter 7** will include a discussion of the two candidates speeches, comparing their respective representations of American exceptionalism. Finally in **chapter 8** I will provide a conclusion and summary of the findings of the thesis.

## **2. The Context: 2012 Elections**

In this section I will give a brief overview of how foreign policy played a part in Romney and Paul campaigns for the 2012 presidential elections. Even though foreign policy is rarely a decisive factor for presidential elections (Drezner 2013), it was one of the focal points of both candidates' critique of Obama's first term in office and serves as a suitable context for exploring how the candidates' perception of America's place in the world is structured by the exceptionalist tradition.

The 2012 campaign was Mitt Romney's second bid for the Republican nomination, having lost to John McCain in 2008, and he entered the primaries as the presumed front-runner (BBC 2012). Mitt Romney's foreign policy stance during the 2012 election was in many ways founded on the notion that Obama's foreign policy had not been assertive enough. Obama's perceived lack of faith in American exceptionalism was picked up by his detractors during the 2012 campaign. Newt Gingrich, who was also running for the Republican nomination, stated that the debate over protecting American exceptionalism would be "one of the two or three deciding issues of 2012." (Page 2010) The issue of American exceptionalism was thus intrinsic to the 2012 election and served as one of the major points of criticism for how Obama had handled the nation's foreign policy during his first term.

Ron Paul's 2012 campaign was his third run for president; running as a Libertarian in 1988 and Republican in 2008 and 2012. Although never officially suspending his campaign Paul announced on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012 that he would no longer campaign in future primaries and caucuses (Weiner 2012). Paul refused to endorse Romney for the Republican ticket arguing that: "The foreign policy stays the same, the monetary policy stays the same, there's no proposal for any real cuts and both parties support it"

(Paul in David 2012). In contrast to Romney, whose critique was largely based on a conception of a feckless and passive Obama foreign policy, Paul's criticism was based on the notion that American foreign policy had lost its way, arguing that the US should "stay out of the internal affairs" of other nations (Paul 2011). Paul and Romney thus both criticized the current administration's foreign policy; however their basis for the criticisms was based on radically different assertions.

### **3. Theory and Method**

In this chapter I will account for the epistemological foundation for this thesis and outline the methodology utilized. I will first define some of the core concepts, and then delve more into the theories that I will utilize. I will draw from the traditions of discourse analysis as well as RPA, thus using an integration of both approaches for my analysis.

#### **3.1 Social Constructivism**

The analysis in this thesis leans on the epistemological premises of social constructivism. Constructivism is a multifaceted philosophical perspective, and as such it is difficult to give a general definition of what it entails (Jørgensen and Phillips 2006:12)<sup>1</sup>. Summarized, constructivism concerns how taken for granted objects and practices of social life are in fact constructed (Fearon & Wendt 2002:57). James Fearon and Alexander Wendt (2002:52) hold that constructivism should be viewed as an analytical tool that entails a set of arguments regarding social explanations, which will often have methodological implications (Fearon & Wendt 2002:52).

Although constructivism is multidimensional some generalizations can be made. Emanuel Adler (2002:96) argues that most constructivists share the belief in "the social construction of knowledge and the construction of social reality". Emphasis is

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<sup>1</sup> All translations from sources not in English are my own.

<sup>2</sup> Panama 1989-Operation Just Cause, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1992-Operation Provide Promise, Somalia 1993- Operation Restore Hope, Haiti 1994-Operation Restore Freedom, Afghanistan 2001-Operation Enduring Freedom, Iraq 2003-Operation Iraqi Freedom (changed to Operation New Dawn in 2010)

<sup>3</sup> Letters of Marque and Reprisal are "papers from a belligerent government authorizing privately owned vessels, commonly known as privateers, to engage in warfare against enemy commerce. The Constitution gives Congress power to 'grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on

thus put on how common ideas are initiated in practices and that material things are always mediated by the ideas that give them meaning. Constructivists seek to show how social agents are constructed. That is, finding out the socialization process that shapes identities and interests of social agents (Fearon and Wendt 2002:57). It should be noted that “a constructivist argument does not entail the more radical assertion that there is no external reality outside of human consciousness if by external reality is meant physical reality” (Weddes 1996: 286).

Most constructivist approaches share four fundamental premises (Burr in Jørgensen and Phillips 2006:13). Firstly most constructivists necessitate a critical approach to taken for granted knowledge. Our view of knowledge and reality are not reflections of an objective reality but rather a product of our way of viewing and categorizing the world. Secondly our knowledge about the world is always culturally and socially embedded. Hence how we understand and represent the world is historically specific and contingent. Thirdly comes the connection between knowledge and social processes; knowledge is created through social interaction constructing common truths and where claims to what is right and wrong are disputed. Finally most constructivists share an emphasis on the connection between knowledge and social actions (ibid).

An implication of a constructivist approach is that the major focus of the analysis is not on causal explanations but, rather, constitutive explanations (Fearon and Wendt 2002:57). Constitutive explanations entail that we are not concerned with “where actors or their properties come from [...], but about their social conditions of possibility at a given moment” (Fearon & Wendt 2002:63). This again leans on the notion that intersubjective knowledge and ideas have “constitutive effects on social reality and its evolution” (Adler 2002:102).

Constructivism embraces a methodologically holistic approach when it comes to research strategy (Fearon and Wendt 2002:57). Actors and interests are not taken as externally given. Instead, constructivists typically problematize the actors, making

them the objects of the analysis (Finnmore 1996:4). Theoretical approaches that take actors and interests as externally given presume that preferences are unproblematic since they believe that actors know their own and other state's interests. Furthermore they presuppose that these interests are readily available for researchers to uncover (Finnmore 1996:7). Constructivism on the other hand considers that actors and interests are not externally given but rather seeks to "explain why people converge around specific norms, identities and cause-effect understandings, and thus where interests come from" (Adler 2002:102).

### **3.2 Discourse**

In this section I will give an overview of the concept of discourse and discourse analysis as a method of social enquiry. Discourse analysis is not one single approach but rather refers to a multitude of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches (Jørgensen and Phillips 2006:9). Jørgensen and Phillips (2006:12) emphasize that discourse analysis cannot be viewed in isolation from its theoretical and methodological foundation; hence one must accept some inherent philosophical premises which in turn have implications for methodology. Most approaches to the study of discourses are based on social constructivism and are hence confined to the theoretical framework inherent in constructivism (ibid:13).

Discourse can be defined as a "particular way of representing some part of the (physical, social, psychological) world" (Fairclough 2003:17). Jørgensen and Phillips (2006:9) define discourse as a distinct way of speaking of and understanding the world or a part of the world. Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus (2005:307) describe discourse as a system of rules which legitimates certain knowledge, but not others, and defines who has the right to speak with authority. Roxanne Doty (1993: 302) in turn, defines discourse as "a system of statements in which each individual statement makes sense, produces interpretive possibilities by virtually making it impossible to think outside it". Accordingly discourse can be seen as providing "discursive spaces, i.e., concepts, categories, metaphors, models and analogies by which meanings are created" (ibid). Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (2006: 3)

see discourse as “language use relative to social, political and cultural formations”, where language is both a reflection of and at the same time shapes the social order, thus shaping individuals’ interaction with society. In the words of Fairclough (1992:4): “Discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct and constitute them.”

Despite the multifaceted and elusive nature of discourse as a concept, most approaches to the study of discourse share a set of common theoretical commitments and characteristics (Bergström and Boréus 2005:326). *Firstly*: the notion that language and the use of language are not viewed as neutral instruments of communication. Language is formed in a social context, and social phenomena such as identities and relations are constructed by language. It is hence through language the social and political reality is constructed, and accordingly our social reality is not fixed but is perpetually being produced and constructed (ibid:326-327). *Second*: the notion that one often seeks to reconstruct social identities through discourse analysis. Identities are malleable, and the formation of identities is done through and inside the discourse. Identities are only possible in placing them in opposition to something else, something they are not (ibid:327). *Third*: the analysis of discourse is often concerned with power relations. Discourses define what can be said, and by who, and can be viewed as a struggle for definitional power (ibid:328). Discourses thus define who is authorized to speak and to act with legitimacy: enabling certain individuals and groups while restricting others (Milliken 1995:229). *Finally*: most approaches to analyzing discourse are unconcerned with the motives of actors (Bergström and Boréus 2005:328). Motives are elusive, making it difficult to ascertain what motives are behind any given action.

### **3.3 Rhetoric**

In this section I will give an overview of the concept of rhetoric, as rhetoric is an important tool for both the construction and operationalization of discourse in political speeches. Aristotle (2001:4) defined rhetoric as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion”. Proficiency in rhetoric is based on the extent to which one can organize the perceptions of the real world and experiences of those

being persuaded, so that what is communicated appears to be self-evident and natural (Heradstveit and Bjørgo 1987:11). Rhetoric is about making the audience see the world through the lens/conviction of the speaker. When analyzing political rhetoric the interest lies not in judging the truthfulness of factual statements, but rather to see how such statements are employed and used in political situations (ibid). Herastveit and Bjørgo (ibid: 12) portray rhetoric as a sort of tug-of-war between values, and hold that politics is more about values and attitudes than about knowledge and facts. Although political rhetoric often depicts itself as a true image of the given situation, the intent of rhetorical analysis is to see the mechanisms of factual assertions and how they are used in specific political contexts, and not to assess how truthful an alleged factual claim is (ibid:13).

When analyzing any political argument, there will be numerous conflicting factual claims. To understand an argument one must analyze how certain facts and notions are illuminated to substantiate certain interests and to promote certain solutions to conflicts, whereas others are repressed. The use of such selective historical narratives function as origin myths which, whether based on historical facts or not, serve as a guarantee for the current social order or for an alternative social order (Herastveit and Bjørgo 1987:13). In political rhetoric it is often useful to use historical inventions or particular perceptions of historic events in order to legitimize policy. These historical inventions must seem credible and ring true to the target audience. This ring of truth is often no more than a ring of familiarity, something the audience has heard before and accepts at face value (Cruz 2000:280). When legitimating foreign policy it can thus be useful for policy makers to contextualize events in the frame of something familiar. Consequently “rivals will draw on the same rhetorical frame –the same fundamental, easily graspable ‘truths’—to advance their contending views of past and future” (Cruz 2000:280).

The study of political rhetoric entails seeing how different myths are activated and unveiling the different metaphors used to legitimate power. The struggle for power entails winning credibility for your way of perceiving the world (Johansen 2003:239).

John Wilson (1990:10) writes in a similar vein that "Since classical times it has been accepted that language plays a role in the creation of political reality. There is an assumption that the aim of the analysis of political talk is to uncover the rhetorical techniques used by politicians to create and manipulate a specific view of the world". Cruz (2000:275) writes that persuasion is the most direct way of mobilizing or paralyzing a group and the reason why rhetorical power "is deployed by the full range of political agents, from aboriginal chiefs in recondite regions of South America to professional politicians on Capitol Hill".

Anderson (1981) advocates the virtues of studying what is articulated by statesmen. He (ibid:746) states that "Arguments are the basis for all government action". He (1981:740) continues: "Advocates of new actions, of continuing an existing policy, or of inaction must support their cases with arguments. Regardless of what is being proposed or opposed, supporting arguments are required". Legitimacy and rhetoric are thus intrinsically connected and the acquisition and maintenance of rule is as much dependent on legitimacy as on physical coercion. Legitimacy must thus be established through rhetorical action (Weber in Krebs and Jackson 2007:38).

A function of arguments is to block out other competing arguments, by for example appealing to certain undisputable ideals and in the process undermining the opposition's arguments. One such strategy is "wrapping one's self in the flag", meaning that competing arguments will be portrayed as unpatriotic or subversive to the nation's ideals (Anderson 1981:746). An example would be the "support the troops" slogan used by the pro-war side for the American invasion of Iraq. The counter view of being against the war is equated with being against the troops. Of course supporting the troops and being against the war are not mutually exclusive sentiments. The phrase in itself is meaningless.

### **3.4 Textual Analysis**

According to Fairclough (2003:3), transcripts of spoken conversations and interviews are texts. Accordingly, political speeches are to be regarded as texts. Texts are useful



for study of the social sciences because they “constitute a major source of evidence for grounding claims about social structures, relations and processes” and “the evidence we have for these constructs comes from the various material forms of social action, including texts” (Fairclough 1995:209). Textual analysis should be seen as a supplement to other methods of analysis, and not a replacement according to Fairclough (2003:15). The focus of this thesis leans on the assumption that language is an important part in the study of foreign policy. Politics is more often than not a question of frameworks of opinions, attitudes, and values than about knowledge and facts (Herastveit and Bjørge 1987:12). The study of language is important because language is “the medium for construction of intersubjective meanings” (Adler 2002:103). Moreover “social communication depends on language which is the vehicle for the diffusion of ideas [...] a mechanism for the construction of social reality” (ibid). Discourse is important because it shapes the way people think about the world around them, which is consequential because “People do not act according to how the world is, but according to how they believe it is” (Herastveit and Bjørge 1987:13). Fairclough (2003:8) elaborates on the importance of texts, stating that as elements of social events they have causal effects because they influence our knowledge base, attitudes, values and beliefs. As such, “Texts can [...] start wars, or contribute changes in education, or to changes in industrial relations, and so forth” (ibid).

### **3.4.1 Rhetorical Political Analysis**

This thesis analyzes the transcripts of two political speeches. Politics can be defined as an arena for the contestation of differing worldviews, which also inherently presumes a contest of ideas, meanings and belief (Finlayson 2007:552). Political disputes arise because parties in the dispute come from different contexts with different criteria of assessment. Consequently political disputes are concerned with problems without solutions in the sense that there are no agreed evaluative standard; “people disagree not only about a particular matter but about what the matter in fact is” (Finlayson 2007:550). Winning the battle of defining what the matter in fact *is*, is dependent on producing the most convincing arguments in favor of one’s cause. To

succeed in this, rhetoric is a useful tool. Hence, I will here describe the key concepts of Rhetorical Political Analysis as the methodological approach of my thesis.

Finlayson (2007) illuminates a number of steps to systematically investigate political rhetoric. First, when analyzing a text one must identify and specify the context; the texts must be located within their rhetorical situation (Finlayson 2007:554). The rhetorical situation can be conceived as dictating the *rules of engagement*, defining who is authorized to speak and procedural rules. The rhetorical situation also sets the identity of the participants, defining certain positions vis-à-vis each other such as expert and layman, leader and led (Finlayson 2007:554). The identity of the audience can be ambiguous in the sense that communication is often spread beyond its original context. Accordingly a speech made to party members at a party convention might be recorded and shown in different contexts. The rhetorical situation can hence be seen as intrinsically ambiguous and thus creates uncertainty concerning the given identities of the parties involved in the political exchange of arguments (Finlayson 2007:554).

Within the rhetorical situation arguments take place. What the argument is regarding can be ambiguous; both in relation to form (the type of argument) and content (the subject under dispute) (Finlayson 2007:554). Form can be understood as the point of a dispute, or the bone of contention. The form of an argument can according to Roman rhetorical theory be understood through ‘stasis theory’, which identifies four points of argument: arguments of conjecture, definition, quality and place (ibid). Arguments of conjecture are concerned with facts, that is; whether something happened or not. Arguments of definition relate to the naming of things and the contention for defining things in advantageous ways; for example stealing something versus borrowing. How actions are defined hence has implications for how they are judged (Finlayson 2007:554). Arguments of quality concern the nature of a given act, for example was the act malicious or well intentioned? (Finlayson 2007:554). Arguments of place attempt to set the boundaries of arguments, in other words what should be on the agenda and what should be ignored? Arguments of place are important because they rule certain things off the agenda, which entails winning before the argument has even

begun (Finlayson 2007:554). The form of an argument is thus “established by the act of arguing itself” and “the side that succeeds in fixing it secures great advantage” (ibid).

The content of an argument is also often ambiguous, even though it might seem clear at face value. Finlayson (2007:555) notes that even though we would expect speeches on foreign policy to be about foreign policy, things are not always so clear. The framing of problems and how phenomena are problematized are important in this regard and it is important to assess how attention is directed towards certain objects and deflected from others (ibid). A single text or document will be related to a broader discourse, and it is important for the addresser to establish or disestablish connections with the greater discourse. Hence the point of much political argument is “to make such connections possible, plausible and natural” (ibid). These connections between specific and general policies are “often forged by very general ethical presumptions that connect to deep-rooted political ideologies and ontologies” (ibid).

Another part of rhetorical analysis is to identify generic features of the text. For example forewords, particular kinds of sentence and syntax, use of pronouns etc. These features help define the text and are a way of manifesting the authority of the given document (ibid:556). Discourse that is presented as unemotional and formal will tend to be viewed as more objective and by presenting material in this manner facts and normative claims become blurred (ibid).

The use of *narratives* is another aspect of rhetoric and RPA. Narratives can be seen as “a fundamental way in which we grasp the meaning and ordering of events we experience and in particular how we understand human actions and their effects” (Finlayson 2007:557). “The way in which we order facts, integrating them into a presentation of beginning, middle and end can be highly significant” (ibid).

Another important concept in RPA is commonplaces. *Commonplaces* can be described as stock devices that are “rhetorically self sufficient [...] because they

reflect common-sense maxims”. (Augoustinos et al. 2002:110). As such commonplaces are culturally and historically specific (ibid). RPA seeks to identify what these are and how they are used (Finlayson 2007:557). The central concern of rhetorical strategy is the appeal and this is closely related to commonplaces. According to Finlayson (2007:558) RPA seeks “to identify how commonplaces become accepted and employed in the reasoning processes of political actors and in the arguments they then employ with others” (ibid)

The three classical modes of appeal are *pathos*, *logos* and *ethos*. *Logos* is based on logical justifications. Rhetoric often employs enthymemes, which rely on quasi-logical arguments. Enthymemes rely on activation of certain commonplaces and the “construction or validation of a premise from which further deductions can logically follow” (Finlayson 2007:558). Appeals to *ethos* are linked to the personal character of the speaker (Aristotle 2001:4). Implicit in these appeals might be claims to authority or honesty or getting the audience to identify with the speaker (Finlayson 2007:558). *Ethos* thus appeals to the audience’s perception of the addresser’s character and is concerned with more rigid, long term emotions in the audience that may exist before and after the situation (Jørgensen and Onseberg 2003:62). Appeals to *pathos* are concerned with putting the audience in a certain frame of mind; stirring the emotions of the audience (Aristotle 2001:4). *Pathos* thus appeals to more spontaneous in-the-moment emotions (Jørgensen and Onseberg 2003:64). According to Hans J. Morgenthau (1978) “The rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational”. As such appeals to *ethos* and *pathos* can be seen as essential in legitimizing foreign policy.

In addition to the concepts outlined above, the rhetorical devices of compassion move, negative lexicalization, intertextuality, hyperbole, and euphemism will also be utilized for my analysis. *Compassion move* refers to “Showing empathy of sympathy for (weak) victims of Others’ actions, so as to enhance the brutality of the Other” (Van Dijk 1995:154). *Negative lexicalization* can be defined as “The selection of (strongly)

negative words to describe the actions of the Others” (ibid). *Intertextuality* in its broadest sense refers to “the presence of actual elements of other texts within a speech—quotations” (Fairclough 2003: 39). *Intertextuality* may also refer to a summary of something that has been said (ibid). *Hyperbole* refers to the “description of an event in strongly exaggerated terms” (Van Dijk 1995:154). Finally, *euphemism* is an innocuous expression, used in place of an expression that may seem uncomfortable, offensive or inappropriate (Eide 1999:64).

### **3.5 Validity, Reliability and Material Selection**

As my thesis is qualitative it naturally inherits both the positive and negative methodological implications of qualitative studies. Traditionally when assessing the merits of a research design, particularly quantitative studies, the notions of validity and reliability have been central concepts. When applied to quantitative studies reliability is generally understood as whether the experiment, when conducted under the exact same conditions, will yield the same results (Ringdal 2001:166). Validity, on the other hand, refers to “whether you are observing, identifying, or ‘measuring’ what you say” (Mason in Bryman 2004:273).

The concepts of validity and reliability become more problematic when applied to qualitative studies. When operating with textual analysis one rarely, save for some approaches dealing with quantifiable aspects of texts, applies the rigid understandings of validity and reliability used in quantitative research. Qualitative research designs normally do not follow the same systematic method of data collection and analysis applied by most quantitative studies, and often relies on unsystematic considerations of what is deemed important (Bryman 2004:284-285). This has implications for the objectivity, transparency and replication of the study. The issue of objectivity is a point of contention in textual analysis. Fairclough (2003:14) points out “there is no such thing as an ‘objective’ analysis of a text”, as it will always be biased by the subjectivity of the analyst.

On the issues of transparency and replication Jørgensen and Phillips (2005:152) emphasize that in the analysis of texts and discourse through systematic linguistic analysis one can provide detailed evidence for the claims made about the texts and how one reached the results from the analysis. It is also important in the presentation of the analysis to give the reader insight into the steps taken to reach the result, and as such give the reader a chance to make her own judgments (ibid). The use of RPA can be seen as compromise in terms of the transparency of the study. Although the analysis of text naturally involves subjective judgments, the use of direct quotes from the speeches contributes to the transparency. The use of the different methods will always involve trade-offs, and the strength of qualitative approaches lies in the emphasis on context and the contextual understanding of social behavior (Bryman 2004: 280)

### **3.5.1 Selection of Material**

I have elected to analyze one speech from each candidate held under the Republican primaries for the 2012 American presidential election. I have chosen to analyze speeches as they are pre-prepared and give the candidate opportunities to give a more thoughtful and deliberate stance, as opposed to debates where views are expressed more spontaneously. It should be presumed that the speeches represented in this thesis are not written solely by the candidate, but rather in conjuncture with speechwriters.

I have chosen Ron Paul's speech announcing his running for the Republican primaries in Exeter, New Hampshire on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2011. For Romney I have chosen his speech at the Citadel College in Charleston, South Carolina on 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2011. There are a few issues that merit closer attention in regard to the selection of material. First and foremost the two candidates are in different positions, where Romney was considered the front-runner for the Republican ticket; Paul was considered by many as a fringe candidate. The main purpose was to find speeches that reflected the respective candidates foreign policies, however Paul did not hold a speech focusing exclusively on foreign policy during his campaign. Hence, whereas Romney's speech could be characterized as a "foreign policy" speech, Paul's speech referenced domestic,

economic and foreign policy. Moreover, whereas Paul gave his speech to an audience of supporters, Romney's speech was given in front of the staff and students at the college. This could be seen as a weakness of the analysis as the way material is presented will to a certain extent reflect who the addresser is talking to, and the context under which he is speaking. However both candidates delivered their respective addresses to domestic audiences, both seeking to account for their respective foreign policy views, and the aim of the thesis is to see how foreign policy is legitimized through the notion of American exceptionalism. As with all data selection there will always be tradeoffs in terms of how much material to include and what level of specificity should be applied when conducting the analysis. Due to confines of space I have elected to not cite the speeches in their entirety, but rather extract the relevant arguments, presented in bold typing in the analysis. This is especially in regard to Paul's speech, due to the fact that it is not exclusively a foreign policy speech.

#### **4. Terminology and Definitions**

In this section I will account for the relevant terms used in this thesis. I will elaborate on the notions of identity, norms, values, and myths as these concepts are integral to the discourse of American exceptionalism. I will then outline the concepts of symbols and legitimacy, seeing as the object of political speech is to legitimate one's view.

##### **4.1 Identity**

An important part of discourse is how it constitutes identities (Jørgensen and Phillips 2005:151). Samuel P. Huntington (2004:21) defines identity as "an individual's or group's sense of self. It is a product of self-consciousness, that I or we possess distinct qualities as an entity that differentiates me from you and us from them". Hence intrinsic to the concept of identity is that it not only defines who we are either as an individual or as part of a group, but who we are in relation to someone else. Consequently identity necessitates the notion of an external other, or as Huntington (ibid:24) puts it, to "define themselves, people need an other". Identities "bond individuals into an imagined social whole" (Merom 1999:409). Moreover, identities are to a large extent constructed, and people construct their identity under varying

degrees of pressure (Huntington 2004:22). The attributes of a given identity can be imagined, inherent or acquired (Merom 199:409). Social groups primarily base their collective identity on two perceptions, firstly how they share similar attributes with others within the group, and secondly how these attributes differ from those of other social groups (ibid).

On an individual level identities can be seen as “imagined selves: they are what we think we are and what we want to be” (Huntington 2004:22). Likewise national identities are also constructed and nations can be seen as “imagined communities” (Anderson in Huntington 2004:20), thus “a nation only exists when a group of people think of themselves as a nation, and their conceptions of themselves may be highly fungible” (Huntington 2004:107). Anthony D. Smith (2003:25-25) defines national identity as “the maintenance and continual reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that form the distinctive heritage of the nation, and the identification of individuals with that heritage and its pattern”. Robert Cooper (2002:20) defines national identities as being composed of the raw material of history, culture and language. In a similar vein Huntington (2004:116) writes that “No nation exists in the absence of a national history, enshrining in the minds of people common memories of their travails and triumphs, heroes and villains, enemies and wars, defeats and victories”. National identities are not rigid and timeless but are “constructed and deconstructed, upgraded and downgraded, embraced and rejected” (ibid:107). Joyce Appleby (1992:424) states that national identity is “dependent upon the wide circulation of compelling ideas to create the imagined community that forms a nation”.

National identity applies to foreign policy in the sense that it is “common belief that causes all domestic groups to aggregate their views around a specific institution [...] and to grant that institution the capacity to use force legitimately against or on behalf of its citizens” (Nau 2002:5). National identity is thus “the principal idea on which a nation accumulates and legitimates the use of lethal force” (ibid). Huntington (2004:10) notes that national interests in turn derive from national identity. He



believes that questions concerning foreign policy directions are rooted in conflicts over what citizens perceive themselves as at home. Hence how the national identity is *defined* has implications for that nation's interests according to Huntington (2004:10). He (ibid) elaborates,

If American identity is defined by a set of universal principles of liberty and democracy, then presumably the promotion of those principles in other countries should be the primary goal of American foreign policy. If however, the United States is “exceptional”, the rationale for promoting human rights and democracy elsewhere disappears. If the United States is primarily defined by its European cultural heritage as a Western country, then it should direct its attention to strengthening its ties with Western Europe

Huntington thus posits that identity shapes interests. He also points out what can be viewed as a fundamental paradox of American exceptionalism; how can the notions of promoting human rights and democracy be consolidated with the idea that the US is exceptional and as such cannot be emulated? This argument of incompatibility between the values of American exceptionalism and certain policies, however, does not discredit the idea that these very policies are framed in the light of American exceptionalism.

## **4.2 Norms**

The concepts of norms and identity are closely related. According to Jepperson et al. (1996:5) norms can be described as “collective expectation for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity”. Legro (2000:267) describes expectations as “what societies anticipate based on the norms of the dominant episteme and the justifications for the chosen course of action”. Norms are thus instrumental in proscribing acceptable behavior for a group of people. When norms proscribe behavior they can be described as having a regulative effect (Katzenstein 1996:5). When norms act as rules that define the identity of actors on the other hand they have, using Katzenstein's (ibid) terminology, a constitutive effect. Norms can thus be seen as either defining an identity or laying out rules for what is acceptable behavior in accordance with a specific identity. Finnmore (1996-22-23) distinguishes between norms and ideas. Whereas ideas can be held privately, norms are shared and are not just subjective, but rather intersubjective. Furthermore ideas may or may not be related to behavior,

whereas norms by definition concern behavior (ibid). Norms can be violated, but the fact that one can label certain behavior as being a violation of a norm indicates the existence of that very norm (ibid).

### **4.3 Values**

Lipset (1996:24-25) distinguishes between attitudes and values: “Attitudes are more malleable; they vary with events and contexts [...] Values are well-entrenched, culturally determined sentiments produced by institutions or major historical events, for example, a new settler society, a Bill of Rights, Protestant sectarianism, wars, and the like”. Van Dijk (1995:156) underlines the importance of values in the establishing identities noting: “The most fundamental way of establishing a distinction between THEM and US is not only describing ourselves in benevolent terms, but to emphasize that the Others violate the very norms and values we hold dear”.

### **4.4 Myth**

Citrin et al. (1994:2) define national myth as “the situation in which one nationalist ideology comes to prevail”. The national myth implies that more or less all citizens of the nation accept one definition of the nation’s identity, and find this definition as a legitimate source of unity (Citrin et al. 1994:2). Citrin et al. (1994:2) argue that a national myth can change if citizens articulate rival nationalist ideologies. The notion of American exceptionalism deals with a national myth that has been very resilient throughout American history and has remained largely unchanged. Donald Pease (2009:156) writes that “National cultures conserve images of themselves across time by constructing [...] larger-than-life myths and transmitting them from one generation to the next”. As such, policymakers and writers are able to place historical contingent events within “preconstituted frames of reference that would control the public’s understanding of their significance” (Pease 2009:156).

### **4.5 Legitimacy**

According to Max Weber (in Fairclough 2003:87-88) “every system of authority attempts to establish and cultivate the belief in its legitimacy”. Legitimation, moreover, “provides explanations and justifications of the salient elements of

institutional tradition“ (Berger and Luckmann in Fairclough 2003:88). Legitimacy can in general be perceived in two ways: either it can be viewed in terms of legality; that is, the “extent to which a regime and its authorities abide by the appropriate legal provisions” (Fraser 1974:118). Alternatively it may refer to matters of individual values, expectations and attitudes, in other words “perceived performance of regimes and authorities judged against *whatever* norms or standards members of the system wish to employ” (Fraser 1974:118). In the words of Nieburg (in Fraser 1974:118):

“Legitimacy cannot be claimed or granted by mere technicality of law; it must be won by the success of state institutions in cultivating and meeting expectations, in mediating interests and in aiding the process by which the values of individuals and groups are allocated in the making, enforcement, adjudication, and general observance of law”.

High legitimacy for a political system is thus, according to the latter definition, a matter of convincing a substantial amount of system members that it behaves as it ought to behave.

It should be emphasized, as pointed out by Finnmore (2009:63), that using rhetoric based on national values and identity is not necessarily a strategic ploy; decision makers and the general public may, rather, hold these values to be true to some degree. Indeed, leaders might have acquired their positions through constructing foreign policies that reflect domestic values, thus gaining public support. Hence the values entrenched in public speeches might be part of their own value system and as such they believe their own rhetoric.

Van Leeuwen (in Fairclough 2003:98) outlines four strategies for legitimation: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation and mythopoesis. The strategy of authorization entails the process of legitimation “by reference to the authority of tradition, custom, law, and of persons in whom some kind of institutional authority is vested” (Fairclough 2003:98). Rationalization refers to “legitimization by reference to the utility of institutionalized action, and to the knowledge society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity” (Fairclough 2003:98). Moral Evaluation refers to

legitimation by referencing to value systems and finally mythopoesis involve legitimation conveyed through narratives (Fairclough 2003:98). Fairclough (2003:99) believes that all the strategies involve some form of moral evaluation, hence the legitimation characterization of ‘Moral Evaluation’ is reserved for instances where it is used exclusively.

The way in which policies are deemed legitimate will vary greatly according to the norms of the time and the norms and ideals of the audience one is addressing. Hence legitimizing actions for domestic audiences will normally be based upon different rationales than legitimizing those very same actions for an international audience. Consequently certain aspects will be enhanced in one context, and downplayed in another. Gaskarth (2006:328) writes that a way of legitimizing any policies is by suggesting that this is the way things have always been done. Politicians may cite political traditions of foreign policy or reference great statesmen of the past to lend authority to their statements. Hence according to Gaskarth (ibid), “associating a policy with the past legitimizes it” and conversely “deviating from tradition makes it potentially politically costly”.

#### **4.6 Symbols**

Walter Lippmann (1922:132) writes that symbols can mean literally anything and does not signify anything in particular. This gives credence to the idea that the tenants of American exceptionalism can be united with a vast array of different and mutually exclusive policies. As an example Lippman (1922:132) cites three different views on particular issues, using the very same symbol to represent their particular point of view. Lippman (1922:132) writes:

If for example one man dislikes the League [of nations], another hates Mr. Wilson, and a third fears labor, you may be able to unite them if you can find some symbol which is the antithesis of what they all hate. Suppose that symbol is Americanism. The first man might read it as meaning the preservation of American isolation, or as he may call it independence; the second as the rejection of a politician who clashes with his idea of what an American president should be, the third as a call to resist revolution.

Lippman here illuminates that the term *Americanism* doesn't represent a specific measure which can be scrutinized, but rather that the same symbol is used as the antithesis to what the particular viewpoints oppose. Symbols that are linked to nationalism and a particular stereotyped society are referred to as protosymbols, and matters in public debate will, if possible, be related to these protosymbols (ibid:151). Lippman (ibid) gives the example of raising the fare on the subway, where the debate is symbolized as an issue between the people and interest, and in the term People the symbol American is inserted. The debate then becomes about the Interests versus Americans and hence raising the fare "becomes un-American. The Revolutionary fathers died to prevent it. Lincoln suffered that it might not come to pass, resistance to it was implied in the death of those who sleep in France" (ibid:151). Symbols can hence be a mechanism for both solidarity and exploitation and can be used as an instrument to "deflect criticism, and seduce men into facing agony for objects they do not understand" (ibid).

## **5 American Exceptionalism**

McCracken (2003:1) writes that "the belief in American exceptionalism forms a core element of American national identity and American nationalism". Lepgold and McKeown (1995:369) posit that American exceptionalism is the only clearly articulated view of American foreign policy. The belief in American exceptionalism frames the discourse on foreign policy among decision makers and "affects policy in an almost unseen, unthinkable manner" (McCracken 2003:190). Policies are conceived almost automatically in exceptionalist terms and this is not just "simply because it will be politically advantageous but because those terms form a natural part of the language they use to understand the world around them" (McCracken 2003:190). In this section I will give an overview of what the concept of American exceptionalism entails, its roots and its place in American foreign policy. I will endeavor to extract the core principles entrenched in American exceptionalism and argue that exceptionalism is an integral part of the American identity. I will thus provide the theoretical foundation to fruitfully discuss the use of American exceptionalism in Paul and Romney's speeches.

## 5.1 A Nation Consolidated by Ideology

This section will serve as a bridge between the notions of Americanism and exceptionalism. It should be noted that these are descriptions of a dominant generalized belief system and does not imply an empirical reality. In other words what should be emphasized it is not whether the American self-image conforms to an objective reality, but as Kahn (2005:199), points out, “Facts are not the issue, but rather the imaginative conditions that support a powerful belief in American myth” (Kahn 2005:199).

Citizens of nation states often derive their national identity from a combination of a sense of common history, and shared ethnicity (Lipset 1996:31). Identities are in constant flux, where some elements disintegrate or disappear and others are created and renewed. Huntington (2004:12) argues that, historically, the main components of American identity involved: race, ethnicity, culture (most notably language and religion), and ideology. The racial and ethnic aspects have been erased and cultural America is under siege according to Huntington (ibid). That leaves ideology as the main component of American identity; a frail societal cohesive, especially when not supported by any of the other components (ibid). Huntington (ibid) argues that societies can “postpone their demise and halt disintegration, by renewing values they have in common”.

The constellation of the United States’ republic is unique in that most of its populace is a conglomeration of immigrants coming from a vast variety of different countries and continents. As such, the question of what makes an *American* has yielded a different type of answer, than for example what makes an *Englishman* or a *Frenchman*, precisely because the US is so unique in terms of its’ origins. Cooper (2003:48) illuminates this rather distinctive nature of the American identity writing that: “The United States is a state founded on ideas and its vocation is the spread of those ideas” whereas for example “European countries are based on nation and history”. The American identity is rooted in the adherence to a specific set of values,

which are perceived as both distinctively American, but at the same time universal (Lipset 1996:31). This provides the foundation for one of the paradoxes of the American exceptionalism, namely the blurred lines between what is universal and what is distinctly American. The principles on which the American state was founded are viewed as universal and there is a self-perception that American values are axioms, something the whole world should strive to imitate; at the same time these principles are distinctly American.

Huntington (1982:36) argues that the “United States has no meaning, no identity, no political culture or even history apart from its ideals of liberty and democracy and the continuing efforts of Americans to realize those ideals”. The American identity is thus tied to believing in these values. Moreover a rejection of these values would mean to be ‘un-American’ (Lipset 1996:31). Brock (1974:87) notes that the notion of un-American has no parallel in other languages, citing as an example that between 1938 and 1975 the House of Representatives had a special committee for the investigation of un-American activities.

The American identity can thus be seen as based on believing in certain values, where these values are often seen as embodying an ideology, more specifically the ideology of Americanism. Bell (1975:199) echoes this sentiment stating that Americanism can be seen as a creed and a faith and should thus not be related to ethnicity or territory, but should be viewed as a type of ideology or doctrine. Lipset (1991:16) also concurs with the perception that the American identity centers around what could best be described as an ideology. Intrinsic in Americanism is a set of dogmas concerning what constitutes a “good” society, and can as such be viewed as an ‘ism’ like any other *ethos*, such as communism, fascism or liberalism. In the words of Leon Samson (in Lipset 1991:16):

Americanism is to the American not a tradition or a territory, not what France is to a Frenchman or England is to an Englishman, but a doctrine –what socialism is to a socialist. Like socialism, Americanism is looked upon [...] as a highly attenuated, conceptualized, platonic, impersonal attraction toward a system of ideas, a solemn assent to a handful of final

notions—democracy, liberty, opportunity.

American nationalism can thus be seen as a civic type of nationalism encompassing a set of core values that according to Lipset (1996) include liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez faire. Egalitarian in this sense refers to equality of opportunities, as opposed to equality of outcome. Inherent in this egalitarianism is also an allegiance to individual rights as opposed to group rights (Ruggie 1997:110). The values inherent in Americanism were solidified in its founding documents, and as such “the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution created the American nation and its central myths” (Krakau in Restad 2012:6)

Another component of Americanism is that the American creed is based upon a religious tradition passed on by Protestant dissenters, entailing unyielding moralism. In Samuel Huntington’s (in Lipset 1991:21) view these dissenters are the original source of the heavy intermingling of religion and politics in America’s history, which is also closely related to a components of American exceptionalism, namely the emphasis on moralistic justification in international relations and the dichotomous worldview of good, represented by the America, versus evil. I will return to these topics in the next sections.

Summarized, to be American does not entail a specific ethnicity or race, but involves the belief in the American ideology (Lipset 1996:31). These beliefs were consolidated by the founding providing “the new republic with ready symbols, myths, and statesmen for the building of a common national identity out of 13 republics. Its Enlightenment principles, expressed through its famous documents, forged a nation out of ideas” (Restad 2012:60). In the absence of other binding characteristics, community between people can be established through shared beliefs and value systems, and the more culturally pluralistic a nation become, the more essential the shared political values become in defining what citizens have in common (Huntington 1982:10). In the words of Davis and Lynn-Jones 1987:21) “Americans lack a common



ethnic or linguistic heritage and therefore construct a national identity out of beliefs in their own uniqueness”.

## 5.2 Different or Better?

The term American exceptionalism is ambiguous, and scholars have over the years given different views as to what it entails. American exceptionalism has been attributed vastly different meanings by a variety of people. It has been taken to mean *distinctive* as in merely different from other states, it has been defined as *unique*, as in an atypical state, it has been characterized as *exemplary*, a City on a Hill whose example other nations should follow. It has also meant to entail *exemption from the ‘laws’ of history*, such as the eventual decline of great nations (Pease 2009:8). Indeed, some scholars argue whether exceptionalism can be measured in a meaningful way. Lipset (1996:24) highlights that some find the concept of American exceptionalism to be “too imprecise, too immeasurable, to be useful in explaining continuity or change in behavior on the national or group level”. However, as McCrisken (2003:2) points out, “regardless of whether or not the US is actually exceptional, the belief in American exceptionalism persists”..

Lipset (1991:1) takes the view that American exceptionalism refers to *distinctiveness*, claiming that exceptionalism entails “that America is unique, is different in crucial ways from most countries”. Lipset’s (1996:26) conception of exceptionalism thus entails a mere difference from other countries in major aspects such as institutions, laws and population, believing that the notion of American exceptionalism entail that the US is qualitatively different, and not necessarily better. McCrisken (2003:2) disputes this view of exceptionalism, defining it as “the belief that the United States is an extraordinary nation with a special role to play in human history; not only unique but also superior among nations”. Appleby (1992: 419) also rejects the objective meaning of American exceptionalism claiming: “Exceptional does not mean different. All nations are different; and almost all national sentiments exploit those differences. Exceptionalism does more; it projects onto a nation –in this case a cluster of newly independent states –qualities that are envied because they represent deliverance from a

common lot”. Bell (1991:51) also reiterates the latter definition of American exceptionalism, claiming that uniqueness does not equal exceptionalism. Exceptionalism entails that America is not only different but that it is exceptional in the sense of being exemplary. Furthermore, Bell (1991:51) believes, that inherent in the notion of exceptionalism is the idea of America being conceived as *exempt*, that is, exempt from the fates suffered by empires of the past. Kane (2003:778) also disagrees with Lipset’s definition, asserting that Lipset’s thoughts on exceptionalism downplays the “mythical significance of America as a special nation with an exemplary world mission, a conception that has played such an important role in America’s ideological self-understanding”. Kane (2003:778) furthermore believes that Lipset (1996) underestimates the effects of persistently portraying the American people and American institutions as special and different. According to Kane (2003:778) “Americans have seen themselves not simply as the exemplary bearers of universal civic and political values and thus a witness to the world of the validity of these values, but as a people uniquely qualified by history and circumstances to fulfill and embody them”. Davis and Lynn-Jones (1987:20) echo these sentiments, writing: “American exceptionalism not only celebrates the uniqueness and special virtues of the United States, but also elevates America to a higher moral plane than other countries” (Davis and Lynn-Jones 1987:20).

Donald Pease (2009:7) defines American exceptionalism as “a complex assemblage of theological and secular assumptions out of which Americans have developed the lasting belief in America as the fulfillment of the national ideal to which other nations aspire”. The assumptions inherent in the exceptionalist dogma have in Pease’s (2009:8) opinion “supplied American citizens with the images and beliefs that have regulated the production, transmission, and maintenance of their understanding of what it means to be an American”. Patman (2006:964) describes American exceptionalism as referring to “an informal ideology that endows Americans with a pervasive faith in the uniqueness, immutability and superiority of the country’s founding liberal principles and also with the conviction that the USA has a special

destiny among nations”. Patman thus emphasizes the notion that exceptionalism entails being qualitatively better than other nations.

John Kane (2003:776) writes that the “exceptionalist tradition asserts the special, perhaps unique, relationship of the United States to purportedly universal Enlightenment values”. The myth of American exceptionalism thus suggests that America represents something universal, yet at the same time implies something that is unique and exclusive. Kane (2003:776) writes that this seeming contradiction invites deliberation of whether the policies themselves adhere to universal values, or if the concept is merely a way for a powerful nation to justify imposing its will on weaker states. Hence, exceptionalism can be viewed as a *legitimation* for actions as opposed to something that necessarily *guides* actions. Pease (2009:9) believes that the differing conceptions of American exceptionalism have varied according to the geopolitical demands of the nation at certain points in history and that the plasticity of the concept has ensured its survival. Because American exceptionalism could not be linked to a specific state of affairs it meant that foreign policies directions in different historical moments could be vastly different from one another and still be compatible with American exceptionalism.

### **5.3 The Chosen People**

An integral part of United States history and political tradition is its’ puritanical heritage. Patman (2006:977) writes that Americans’ susceptibility to pious language and metaphors can be linked to the prominence of religion in American society. The United States was at its inception conceived as God’s kingdom on earth, “a deist republic, with a providential destiny and a universal mission” (Ricard 1994:73). The founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony sharply differentiated America from the Old World, proclaiming that “this is the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven, and a new earth in new Churches, and a new Commonwealth together (Davis and Lynn-Jones 1987:22). Moreover the “early Puritan communities contributed to a Protestant strain to nascent national identity as a chosen ‘people’” (Smith in Restad 2012:57) Serge Ricard (1994:73) states that the Founding Fathers were very much

aware of their historic role and viewed themselves as descendants of the builders of a New Jerusalem. America was the holy land and the creation of the United States in the New World was part of God's divine plan. As is pointed out by Schlesinger Jr. (1983:5) the fact that their enterprise was so successful and the power of America grew to such tremendous heights, served as a reinforcement of the belief in divine providence.

Edwards (2001b) notes that the Puritans were a covenant driven people who came to the New World to establish a new Israel. The covenant did not "exalt allegiance to God, but rather allegiance to secular documents like the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, while the Founding Fathers became god-like figures who bestowed this covenant upon the American people" (Ibid). If the American people remained true to the covenant they would be blessed with bounties; however if they strayed from the covenant the American dream could not be fulfilled and that the identity of the citizens would be in peril.

#### **5.4 Characteristics of American Exceptionalism**

McCracken (2003:8) points to three elements of exceptionalism that have been predominant throughout US history. First is the idea that the United States is a special nation with a special destiny. Second, that America is distinctly different from the rest of the world, and specifically Europe. Embedded in this second element is an aversion to realpolitik as was prominent on the European continent at the time of the inception of the American republic, and claims of a foreign policy that was heavily influenced by moralistic concerns. Third, is the belief that America would be exempt from the fate suffered by so many other great nations and empires throughout history; namely ultimately demise. Appleby (1992:426) highlight the pillar of American exceptionalism to be "the autonomy of the individual with its accompanying disparagement of dependency; the clean slate with its implicit rejection of the past; and the concept of a uniform human nature with its ascription of universality to particular social traits" (Appleby 1992:426).

#### **5.4.1 A Value Based Foreign Policy**

The American identity and the notion of exceptionalism are strongly related to the legitimization of foreign policy. The link between exceptionalism and foreign policy entails at its core the application of values to the realm international politics.

Rationalization and legitimization of US foreign policy is thus largely based on the superiority and universality of values upon which the republic was founded, and the tendency to appeal to deeply seated values (Lepgold and McKeown 1995:383). Thus the value based foreign policy has its roots in the assumption of the universal validity of American values, coupled with the belief that the nation has a unique role in the world, and a foreign policy that is more virtuous and altruistic than that of other states (Davis and Lynn-Jones 1987:23). In the words of Abramowitz (2012:1) Americans believe themselves to be “uniquely virtues in words and deed”, a notion that is “reiterated endlessly by our government and political parties”.

The interplay between foreign policy and American exceptionalism might lead one to the inference that American foreign policy should be quite homogenous. There are a few considerations that should be emphasized on this subject. Firstly American exceptionalism does not constrain American foreign policy, but rather is used to gain legitimacy for specific actions. Secondly, the idea of US exemptionalism, which is inherent in exceptionalism, (Ignatieff 2005) implies that the US is being judged by a different standard than other nations; there does not necessarily have to be congruence between action and rhetoric. Kagan (2003:9) emphasize this historical discordance between rhetoric and action stating: “the rhetoric, if not always the practice, of early American foreign policy was suffused with the principles of the Enlightenment”. If there is a substantial divide between values and specific foreign policies, the value system is not changed, as the blame is put on evil foreign or domestic actors (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:383). Hence failure to conform to the values system in any given conflict is not viewed as a defect in the value system, as intentions are always pure, but in the naiveté of an idealistic young nation. This is for example apparent in Henry Kissinger (1994:621), referring to the Vietnam War: “Rarely have the consequences

of a nation's actions turned out to be so at variance with their original intent” (Kissinger 1994:621).

An integral part of the American Creed is the opposition to concentrated power and authority; tenets that stand in stark contrast to notions of large standing armies, and executive power authority in the conduct of foreign policy (Huntington 1982:16). This contradiction was in large part circumvented for much of the country's history due to the geographically advantageous position allowing for an isolationist foreign policy. The United States did not need, nor have, foreign policy institutions such as an intelligence service, a professional foreign service, or a national police force. In the twentieth century sustained isolation became an impossibility, facilitating the development of such institutions (Huntington 1982:16). However, as opposed to Europe, these institutions have been at direct odds with the values of the prevailing ideology of American society. The US foreign policy is thus dominated by a tension between political ideals and an institutional reality. As the US engaged in activities that were at odds with American exceptionalism, it did not change American political values, but rather it served to “intensify the gap between political ideals and institutional reality that is crucial to American national identity” (Huntington 1982:35-36).

Butler (2003:227) claims that US policymakers have been predisposed to seek harmony between the application of American military might and America's stated belief in peace and stability. This is done through the application of what Butler (2003:227) refers to as a “justice-based rhetoric”. Looking at the naming of military engagements<sup>2</sup> since the end of the Cold War it seems apparent that there is a need to portray military operations as just and moral.

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<sup>2</sup> Panama 1989-Operation Just Cause, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1992-Operation Provide Promise, Somalia 1993- Operation Restore Hope, Haiti 1994-Operation Restore Freedom, Afghanistan 2001-Operation Enduring Freedom, Iraq 2003-Operation Iraqi Freedom (changed to Operation New Dawn in 2010)

### **5.4.2 A Dichotomous Worldview**

One of the characteristics of American exceptionalism is the tendency to perceive the world in a dichotomous way. This is apparent in the way in which foreign relations are viewed, where religious symbolism of good versus evil is often incorporated. The concept of morality has a strong position in the American psyche, and the language used when legitimating foreign policy is often filled with the belief that actions are undertaken in the name of piety and justice. One implication of the dichotomous worldview is that compromises are unthinkable, as conflicts are often portrayed as being between God and the devil. Hence the notion of ‘striking a deal with the devil’ is incompatible with this religious way of seeing the world (Lipset 1991:22). Also incorporated in the concept of a dichotomous worldview is the separation between the Old World and the New World, epitomized by a realist- and moralist foreign policy respectively. In the following sections I will illuminate the conflicts within the dichotomous worldview, systematically accounting for the respective dichotomies

#### **5.4.2.1 From the Old World to The New World**

According to Huntington (1982:35) “American exceptionalism has been used to refer to a variety of characteristics that have historically distinguished the United States from European societies”. The origins of American exceptionalism thus stem from the perceived division between America and Europe. As Restad (2012:60-61) points out, the founding of the American republic, with its myths and symbols, symbolized as cutting of bloodlines and as such “laid the premises for the development of an American identity as opposed to a British one. Because the United States decided to break free from England, it was prevented from using its English past as the focus of the usual national project of glorifying one’s heritage, especially since their departure from one another was less than amicable”. In this section I will give an overview of this element inherent of the American exceptionalism literature; the notion of a dichotomous worldview encapsulated by the perceived distinction between the Old World and the New World (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:372).

American exceptionalism has its origins in the exodus of the Massachusetts bay puritans from the Old World into the New World (Spanos 2007:36). Hence at its inception it was defined through its distinction from Europe. They saw themselves as part of the New World, a pristine, unsullied, classless and open society in sharp contrast to the Old World of feudal societies and repressive governments (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:370). Where the Old world was defined in terms of being “old, decadent, sterile, impotent, tyrannical, collective, immobile, effete”, the New World that was perceived as “new, creative, manly, vigorous, productive, free, individualistic, kinetic, progressive” (Spanos 2007:36) The United States was also separated from Europe in the way the it perceived itself as different and superior to Europe in both state structure, and superior in regard to the principles it conducted its foreign affairs. Thus exceptionalism entails the belief in the superiority of American value system, encompassing the notions of “intrinsic individual as opposed to group rights, equality of opportunity for all, antistatism, the rule of law, and a revolutionary legacy which holds that human betterment can be achieved by means of deliberate human actions, especially when they are pursued in accordance with these fundamental values” (Ruggie 1997:110). According to Lipset (2000:32) in “19<sup>th</sup> century America, the ideology of the American Revolution was transformed into an all-encompassing liberalism stressing liberty, antistatism, and individualism”. This new liberalism symbolized a step away from Europe and the old world, as the “hierarchical rooted community values” of Europe were weakened, in favor of individualistic, egalitarian and anti-statist ones (Lipset 1996:268).

#### **5.4.2.1.1 An Aversion to Power Politics**

In terms of foreign policy European states were seen as inferior due to their predisposition to power politics, in contrast to the United States who used commercial and legal mechanisms to deal with other states (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:370). Lepgold and McKeown (1995:370) write that even though this might be a “moralistic interpretation” of the American sheltered experience, it is still thought to be pervasive in the American identity. In an interview with the National Review former national security advisor and secretary of state under George W. Bush Jr. Condoleezza Rice



noted that she was an admirer of Henry Kissinger, admitting “I’m probably a bit of a Realpolitiker in that I think that power balances determine a lot”. A few days later she called the interviewer back wishing to clarify: “I am a realist. Power matters. But there can be no absence of moral content in American foreign policy, and, furthermore, the American people wouldn’t accept such an absence. Europeans giggle at this and say we’re naïve and so on, but we’re not Europeans, we’re Americans — and we have different principles.” (Condoleezza Rice in Nordlinger 1999). Rice’s statement exemplifies the old world versus new world dichotomy. Inherent in this dichotomy is the divide between value-based foreign policy, as represented by the New World and the power politics of realism as represented by the Old World. It should be noted that the distinction between the Old World, representing power politics and the New World representing a value based foreign policy does not necessarily an empirical reality. As Shafer (1999:446) notes, it is not important whether the tenants of exceptionalism are accurate or not, however what is significant is the impact of the belief in exceptionalism among political leaders and the public, and the importance of this self perception on foreign policy. In the words of McCrisken, (2003:4): “Americans generally believe in the myth or rhetoric of American exceptionalism and act on those beliefs”.

Lepgold and McKeown (1995:369) write that the quintessence of exceptionalism lies in the idea “that Americans deprecate power politics and old-fashioned diplomacy, mistrust powerful standing armies and entangling peacetime commitments, make moralistic judgments about other people’s domestic systems, and believe that liberal values transfer readily to foreign affairs”. Lepgold and McKeown (1995) illuminate the notion that America sees itself outside the spectrum of power politics that dominated the European foreign policy. They describe the American foreign policy as one dominated by an aversion to acting in accordance with classical conceptions of national interest. John Mearsheimer (2002) supports this view, stating that “American political culture is deeply liberal and correspondingly hostile to realist ideas”. Mearsheimer (2002) believes that Americans are hostile towards realism because its’ principles goes against deep-seated American values. McCrisken (2003:11) also

supports this claim, writing; “National motives are not perceived as being driven solely by the desire for material gain but also by a dedication to principles of liberty and freedom for all of humankind”. Henry Kissinger (1994:810) also shares this view, or at least that it is adhered to on a rhetorical level. Kissinger (1994:810) notes that the idea of acting in the national interest, as propagated by Richelieu’s *raison d’état*, has always been a repugnant justification for conducting foreign policy in the American consciousness. Foreign policy goals should thus reflect the political principles that define American identity (Huntington 1982:19). If these principles are upheld the policy is morally legitimate, and those opposing those principles are by definition morally illegitimate (ibid).

Despite these alleged aversions to basing foreign policy on self-interests, there is no doubt, according to Kissinger, (1994:810) that such policies have been conducted numerous times throughout America’s history. Schlesinger Jr. (1983:4) points out that the First World War is a good example of involvement where the US acted for traditional balance-of-power reasons, and justified involvement in the name of idealism. According to Schlesinger Jr. (1983:4), Woodrow Wilson refused to admit that it was in the national interest to stop a single power taking over the whole European continent and instead made himself a prophet of a world beyond power politics, claiming the United States to be “the only idealistic nation in the world”, bestowed with the “infinite privilege of fulfilling her destiny and saving the world” (Wilson in Schlesinger Jr. 1983:4). Kissinger (1994:810) mentions Western Expansion under the guise of Manifest Destiny and dealing with European powers in the early days of the republic as examples of acting according to the dictates of realism. Patman (2006:966) mentions that the Cold War was another period where “hard headed realism” was the dominant foreign policy doctrine, citing events such as the 1956 Hungarian uprising, the Cuban missile crisis and Nixon’s *détente* policy during the early 70’s as examples. Robert Kagan (2003:9) argues that the lack of involvement in power politics in the early days of the Republic boils down to the discrepancy in strength between the United States and European powers and not because of utopian ideas of the founders of the nation. Power politics were in other

words not something that was viewed as foreign and repulsive, but rather the foreign policy makers realized the limitations of the current circumstances, perceiving power politics as impractical and thus acting accordingly. Against the weak adversaries on the North American continent they used their power, but they realized that they were inferior to the great powers of Europe and thus expressed an aversion to war and military power (Kagan 2003:10).

Hence the idea is not that principles of *realpolitik* were never followed, but rather that they would not be overtly stated. Mearsheimer (2002) writes that, “we act according to the dictates of *realpolitik*, but we justify our policies in terms of liberal ideologies. So what is going on here is that in many cases, elites speak one language [in public], and act according to a different logic and speak a different language behind closed doors”. Liberman (2006:688) echoes Mearsheimer writing: “Idealistic rhetoric is often needed to convince a moralistic public to support *realpolitik* policies”. Similarly Huntington (1982:5) claims that observers often have a tendency to confuse the values and ideals of American’s with social and political reality. Hence what we are dealing with is a discrepancy between ideals and the degree the country’s institutions can live up to said ideals. This has led to a “disharmony between the normative and existential dimensions of American politics” according to Huntington (1982:1).

Stanley Hoffman, (in Lepgold & McKeown 1995:382) concludes from his study that “American foreign policy is no more moral, display no more fervent idealism, and demonstrates no greater religion of law than the policy of others”. However, since selfish interests are seldom cited as motives for foreign affair actions, “American leaders always claimed to be struggling in the name of principle, not interest (Kissinger 1994:810). Lepgold and McKeown (1995:382) also give credence to this point stating: “it is believed that Americans see conflict and war as unnatural, scholars agree that they view the instruments and objectives of *Realpolitik* suspiciously. They prefer general principles in foreign affairs, especially moralistic and legal ones, to a context-dependent approach” (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:371).

Finnmore (2009:64) suggests that Machiavellian politics are hard to pursue overtly precisely because leaders need to appeal to some sort of shared domestic ideals and thus construct foreign policy that reflect those very ideals. Moreover, Finnmore (2009:65) believes that there is a synthesis between national security motives and normative concerns. Hence, even when pursuing policies that are in the national interest, the US will usually take into account “some broader vision of social good beyond mere self-aggrandizement” (Finnmore 2009:64). For example the idea of spreading democracy throughout the world involves both the normative belief in the virtues of democracy, but also the belief that a world full of democracies is a safer world for America. Likewise, a free international market will both make America richer, but also entails normative concerns such as the belief that free open markets is the way out of poverty for other nations (Finnmore 2009:64).

We can thus see a pattern of the United States not necessarily being different in the way foreign politics are conducted per se, but rather that there is a disjuncture between ideals and practice. Lepgold and McKeown (1995:382) found nothing atypical about US foreign policy behavior compared to other large countries, however they did suggest “American leaders might use unusual internal justifications, perhaps through idiosyncratic symbols and metaphors”. Hence it is in rhetoric the US can be characterized as unusual. Domestic legitimization relies on exceptionalism which resonate with American’s self-image, in order to justify policies which may or may not conform to American ideals and values. In the words of Huntington (1982:1) American’s have “existed in a state of national cognitive dissonance, which they have attempted to relive through various combinations of moralism, cynicism, complacency, and hypocrisy”

US foreign policy can thus be seen as a tug-of-war between two sets of interests. On one side there are interests as defined by realist terms of power, wealth and security, and on the other there is a set of values by which Americans judge their foreign policy (Huntington 1982:18). Americans accordingly seek a convergence between self-interest and morality (ibid:19). Hence for most Americans foreign policy institutions

should be structured and function so as to reflect these specific values, and moreover “American foreign policy should also be substantively directed to the promotion of those values in the external environment” (Huntington 1982:18).

### **5.4.3 Good versus Evil**

Another element of the dichotomous worldview is how conflicts are perceived against a backdrop of a struggle between good and evil. In Kagan’s (2003:4) words:

“Americans generally see the world divided between good and evil, between friends and enemies”. Philip Wander (in Krebs and Lobasz 2007:425) refers to this as the tradition of ‘prophetic dualism’. Implicit in the tradition of prophetic dualism is the idea that there are only two possible outcomes in a potential conflict, total victory or total defeat. The option of negotiation is thus neglected, as the enemy is often portrayed as a manifestation of pure evil. Consequently it is paramount to establish someone as an enemy, who is perceived as an embodiment of evil, when rallying support for foreign policy endeavors (Lieberman 2006:687).

Also embedded in this dichotomous worldview is the notion that war and peace are seen as polar opposites, where peace is seen as the ‘normal’ state and war is viewed as an aberration caused by evil leaders (Lepgold & McKeown 1995:370). Hence in order for the US to go to war they “must define their role in a conflict as being on God’s side against Satan—for morality, against evil. The United States primarily goes to war against evil, not, in its self-perception, to defend material interests” (Lipset 1996:21). In the words of Huntington (1982:20): “If a war is not morally legitimate, then the leaders conducting it must be morally evil and opposition to it, in virtually any form, is not only morally justified but morally obligatory”. The United States thus primarily goes to war against evil, not, in its self-perception, to defend material interests” (Lipset 1996:21). This is intertwined with the idea that material interest is never a legitimate reason to go to war, and also ties in with the moralism versus realism dichotomy.

Abramowitz (2012) writes that the US views itself as “the greatest force of good in the world” and that inherent in this assumption is the notion that US power can be used

unrestrained as it is in essence profoundly moral. In the words of Abramowitz “We are the white hats, the famous city on a hill, and our cause is invariably just, particularly when we use force”. The belief that Americans were God’s chosen people was consolidated by the country’s rise to become a world power, where divine intervention had secured America’s rise to power. In the words of Schlesinger Jr. (1983:5) the fact that America grew to become such a behemoth in the world “confirmed the messianism of those who believed in America’s divine appointment”.

Schlesinger Jr. (1983:5) points out that the good versus evil dichotomy was thoroughly evident during the Cold War. President Reagan defined the Soviet Union as the “the Evil Empire”, viewing the United States as infinitely virtuous and the Soviet Union as infinitely wicked. As such, involvement in activities that might not be perceived as moral, such as massive nuclear weapons buildup, is all Moscow’s fault, because America’s heart is pure (Schlesinger Jr. 1983:5). Rhetorically then the United States never allies itself with evil, hence “if circumstances oblige to co-operate with evil regimes, they are converted into agents of virtue” (Lipset 1991:24). An example of this is when the allied powers embraced Soviet into their alliance when she was attacked by the Germans in 1941. Churchill, welcoming the Soviets to the allied side, went on the radio stating that he was prepared to make a treaty with Satan if necessary to defeat the Nazis. The US, on the other hand, “converted Stalin into benign, pipe-smoking ‘Uncle Joe’. Russia was treated as a free, almost capitalist country” (Lipset 1991:24).

#### **5.4.4 Exemptionalism**

Embedded in the American identity is the exceptionalist mythology that American foreign policy “cannot be judged by the standards applied to other countries” (Davis & Lynn-Jones 1987:24). Ivei and Giner (2009:360) state, “American exceptionalism, as an ensemble of traditional myths, typically evokes attitudes of national autonomy and superiority”. Related to this notion is the idea of being exempt from the laws and rules that apply to other nations. This notion can be described twofold. First it can be viewed in the sense that US believes it is exempt from the fate suffered by all other previous great nations and empires, namely their imminent demise (Pease 2009:8).

Secondly, based on its unequivocal moral superiority it views itself as exempt from the rules manifested in resolutions and international agreements and laws (Ignatieff 2005). In the words of Abramowitz (2012) “only one country—the United States—can be exempt from the rules because of its virtue”. Ignatieff (2005) refers to the latter as US exemptionalism and holds it to be intrinsic to the way US conducts its foreign policy. The US signs human rights treaties and humanitarian law conventions, only to exempt itself through nonratification and noncompliance.

It should be emphasized that exemptionalism should not be mistaken for isolationism or unilateralism, as the US is often involved in bilateral and multilateral agreements (Ignatieff 2005: 5). Rather, it entails that the U.S on account of its exceptional nature has a different status in such agreements, where the standards by which the US judges itself and her allies are far more permissive than those by which they judge their enemies. Hence there is an implicit double standard in American exceptionalism. The US will condemn abuses by states such as Iran and North Korea, while excusing abuses by states such as Israel, Morocco, Jordan and Uzbekistan (Ignatieff 2005:7-8). Moreover America will not impose on itself the laws and regulations which it tries to impose on others in the international community, despite the US government in principle accepting these laws as just (Moravcsik 2005:148).

### **5.5 Projection of American Exceptionalism: Missionary and Exemplarist**

Although there is wide agreement among most Americans regarding the status of America as an exceptional nation, there have been significant differences among presidential candidates as to how these exceptional qualities should be enacted (Edwards 2011c:156). The competing views regarding the foreign policy projection of American exceptionalism can be divided into two sub-groupings, the missionary and the exemplarist (McCracken 2003:2). Both policy trajectories “trace their origins to the same religious and political sources” and hence what “binds them together is the concept of American exceptionalism” (Restad 2012:58).

People who adhere to the missionary branch believe that the United States should spread what they conceive as universally applicable values to the rest of the world through interventions. The missionary branch posits crusading missions to purify the rest of the world in accordance with American principles and values (Huntington 1982:19). The missionary branch is represented by the ideas of “manifest destiny, imperialism, internationalism, leader of the free world, modernization theory and the new world order” (McCracken 2005: 2). Furthermore the missionary strand “postulates that all people of the world want to be like Americans, whether they realize it or not” (Restad 2012:62)

The exemplary branch believes the US should lead by example. The focal point of foreign policy should thus be the maintenance of peaceful trade relations, and building an economically sound society that can serve as an example for other nations to follow, a ‘City Upon a Hill’. Traditionally the exemplary branch and missionary branch have been viewed in terms of representing isolationism and interventionism respectively. Ruggie (1997:119) for example refers to the exemplarist branch as the City Upon a Hill strain of isolationism, where America should shape the international order by serving as an example for the rest of the world. Interventions will thus, according to this branch, have an adverse effect on the mission of leading by example by degrading the purity of the American model at home. Restad (2012) argues that this dichotomy should be discarded and is misleading holding that isolationism was never a part of American foreign policy. Restad (2012:62) points out that “contemporary historians do not think early US foreign policy was isolationist at all, and the term itself only appeared in the early twentieth century as an accusation used by adherents of a vigorous US foreign policy to hurl against the opposition”. Moreover, the Puritan mission never entailed an isolation from the rest of the world. Rather, they sought to spread and reform European society. Accordingly, “Exemplary exceptionalism thus fuses with missionary exceptionalism ” (Restad 2012:59).

## **6. Analysis**



## 6.1 Mitt Romney

Romney's address at the Citadel Military College was his first major speech on foreign policy after announcing his candidacy. The speech analyzed here is in a one-way setting where Romney is the single orator. The audience consists of students and staff at the military academy first hand, and will also include others interested in reading the debate after delivery or watching it through whichever media broadcasting it. It is thus reasonable to also count the Obama administration as an audience in this respect, given that Obama was Romney's opposing presidential candidate in the 2012 elections and hence will have had an interest in reading or watching his speeches. One would presume that the Paul campaign, as an opposing candidate in the primaries, would be an audience to this speech. The audience is passive in this setting, and are not given the opportunity to counter Romney's rhetoric or enter into the debate at the events the speeches were given. Seeing as the speech is given as part of Romney's presidential campaign, it is to be regarded as a propaganda speech, serving the purpose of justifying/legitimizing Romney's candidature and seducing or persuading the audiences into voting for him and his foreign policy.

### 6.1.2 Remarks on US Foreign Policy at The Citadel

Romney opens his speech stating that **"It's a great honor to be in South Carolina, where patriotism is a passion that tops even barbeque and football."** This is an argument of definition, defining South Carolina as patriotic. Romney also sets the identity of the audience in bestowing them with the trait of being great patriots, and implies that this trait is what makes it a great honor to be in South Carolina. Romney hence appeals to the audience's *pathos*, praising their commitment to patriotism and defining it as honorable. The claim that patriotism even trumps barbeque and football defines how serious the audience's commitment is to patriotism, at the same time as striking a humoristic chord and placing patriotism in as natural, everyday a setting as barbeque and football. Mentioning barbeque and football also appeals to the audience's *ethos*, presenting Romney as an ordinary guy, appreciating all-American activities of barbeque and football, and honoring the value of patriotism. This also defines Romney as part of the same group as his South Carolina audience (as they like

the same things and honor the same values), and immediately establishes a common “we” consisting of Romney and his audience.

Romney then singles out his audience at the Citadel as an especially desirable audience, stating **“And it’s a great honor to be here at the Citadel”**. This is another appeal to the audience’s *pathos*, reiterating what he already stated in his opening statement, thus mentioning honor twice in connection to himself (as he is the orator, claiming the honor is to be present at the Citadel) and in connection to his audience (as they constitute the institution Romney thinks it is an honor to visit). Mentioning honor twice in the first two sentences of his speech establishes Romney as a person for whom honor is important, augmenting his *ethos*. It also connects Romney even more tightly to his audience, strengthening the sense of them constituting a “we”. The Citadel is then further distinguished as a “great university”, and furthermore an institution producing not only **“future engineers, doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs”**, but **“heroes”**. This production of heroes is presented as a specialty of the Citadel, conveying an image of this institution as both unique, and, at that, unique at producing *heroes*. Being unique and producing heroes are indisputably positive qualities, and the statement is an argument of definition appealing to the audience’s *pathos*. Referring to the future establishes Romney as a future oriented person, augmenting his *ethos*. Romney then specifies that **“Over 1400 of your alumni have served in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere fighting the war against terrorism. And sixteen have paid the ultimate price.”** This is an argument of conjecture, appealing both to the audience’s *logos* and *pathos*. It is, at the same time, an argument of definition, defining the war USA is fighting as a war against terrorism, further defining the Citadel alumni fighting this American war as heroes. Using the metaphor of *paying the ultimate price* to state how many of these alumni have died in battle shows Romney as a person placing the very highest of values on human life, augmenting his *ethos*. Showing that he knows how many of the Citadel alumni has served and died portrays him as concerned with the Citadel alumni as a group, and as a man who knows his facts, right down to how many and which ones of Americas

youngsters die where in the war against terrorism. This appeals to the audience's *pathos*.

Romney goes on to state that **“Since 1842 every tyrant, petty thug or great power that threatened America learned that if you take on American, you were taking on the Citadel. That’s a line of heroes that’s never broke and never will be”**. Here Romney appeals to the notion of a dichotomous worldview, where America’s enemies are characterized through negative lexicalization as tyrants and petty thugs. He also states that great powers have threatened America, which adds to the image of the US as an omnipotent nation. The portrayal of America and the Citadel versus threatening barbaric instigators establishes the Citadel both as an important part of America’s defense and belonging to a group that is opposed to tyrants and petty thugs. This appeals to the audience’s *pathos*. Establishing the audience as an important part of America’s defense appeals to their sense of responsibility for continuing this role, at it is what has saved America before, and constituting “a line of heroes” that Romney states will never be broken. The argument thus defines the Citadel (and hence the audience) as a key actor in what Romney is about to say further on in his speech regarding the defense of America and whatever he might define as constituting this defense and the enemy the Citadel is to defend America from. Mitt Romney also implies that the instigators are always the enemy. This is both an argument of definition, defining it as heroic to defend the United States, and defining the enemy of the US as thugs and tyrants, and an argument of quality, portraying attacks on America as petty and tyrannical.

Romney then defines the Citadel as **“a true citadel of American honor, values and courage”**. This constructs the image that this is a place where America’s values are institutionalized and incarnated, both consisting of and serving as a bastion to protect the universal values of America. This argument appeals to *pathos* in the audience in that Romney identifies positive traits of the institution that the audience is a member of. Defining these traits as *American* honor, values and courage distinguishes them from other types of honor, values and courage, creating an image of American honor,

American values and American courage as exceptional and qualitatively different to, for instance, Greek honor, values and courage. This further enhances the sense of division between a “we” constituted by Americans, and especially Romney and his audience, and a “they” constituted by the rest of the world.

**“As each of you looks beyond this great institution, to the life before you, I know you face many difficult questions in a world fraught with uncertainty. America is in an economic crisis the likes of which we have never seen in our lifetime. Europe is struggling with the greatest economic crisis since the Cold War, one that calls into question the very definition of the European Union.”** This can be seen as an argument of conjecture appealing to *logos* and introducing Romney’s image of the world outside America.

Romney then portrays and defines the world as one fraught with **“tremendous upheaval and change”**, stating in the next sentence that **“Our next President will face extraordinary challenges that could alter the destiny of America, and, indeed, the future of freedom”**. Romney links tremendous upheaval and change in foreign countries to the hyperbole describing the challenges faced by the American President, thus implying that the involvement of an American President in upheaval and change around the world is natural. The argument defines the challenges met by America’s next President as *extraordinary*, showing that the nature of these challenges requires an extraordinary President. The argument also relates America’s destiny and the future of freedom, placing them in one single group that *could* be threatened by these coming, extraordinary challenges. This implies that any thing challenging America’s destiny also potentially challenges the future of freedom. The argument defines what is at stake, and indeed that there is a lot at stake, creating a sense of urgency of action. Stating that the American President will face challenges that could alter the future of freedom creates an image of the American President as a natural defender of freedom in the setting presented; that of tremendous upheaval and change *around the world*.

Romney then sets up a string of arguments concerning the potential future threats to America and her allies, opening this string saying that **“Today, I want you to join me in looking forward. Forward beyond the next Recognition Day, beyond Ring Weekend to four years from today, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015”**. This portrays Romney as an active, personally engaged subject, as he uses the first person singular pronoun of “I”, inviting the audience personally using the second person plural pronoun of “you” to join him in looking forward. He sets the time of the activity to “Today”, portraying him as a man of action who does not wish to delay looking forward. This enhances his *ethos*. Relating the future specifically to two military commemorative occasions further appeals to the audience’s *pathos* and enhances Romney’s belonging to the same group as his audience, as he relates the future referring to important dates within the culture of his audience. He then introduces a specific date for which he will go on to define what he presents as a likely scenario. This contextualizes the following arguments further.

**“Will Iran be a fully activated nuclear weapons state, threatening its neighbors, dominating the world’s oil supply with a stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz?”**

This is an argument of definition. Romney portrays a future Iran as *threatening* its neighbors and *dominating* the entire *world’s* oil supply, with a *stranglehold* on the Strait of Hormuz. The physical depiction of Iran as actively threatening, dominating and strangling shows Iran as a violent state. Defining Iran as threatening its neighbors, whom one in an everyday context is friendly with, further adds to the image of Iran as a violent, vicious and volatile state. When assuming that the future Iran will also dominate the entire world’s oil supply, whilst strangling the Strait of Hormuz in the next sentence, this image all together portrays Iran as an enemy of the world, not just USA. Romney further adds to the imagery of fear, placing the future nuclear state of Iran as a passive plaything **“In the hands of ayatollahs”**, defining the ayatollahs as the true culprits and insinuating that this whole frightful scenario will not necessarily take place if Iran were governed by someone else. This constellation is then defined through a hyperbole by Romney as **“nothing less than an existential threat to Israel”**. As Israel is a close ally of America, this image of Iran possibly annihilating

Israel defines Iran as a state the USA must defend Israel against. Closing this argument, Romney states that **“Iran’s suicidal fanatics could blackmail the world”**. This further enhances the image of Iran as an enemy of the entire world, which, in addition, in Romney’s view sports suicidal fanatics prone to blackmailing. Placed in this context, this highly irrational and negative characteristic either implicitly defines the ayatollah as suicidal fanatics, or implies that suicidal fanatics in Iran are given so much space and power that they can blackmail the entire world based on Iran’s nuclear power. The entire argument leaves the audience with an image of Iran as an irrational, violent and malicious state possessing dangerous nuclear weapons and threatening the United States’ ally Israel, and hence the United States herself.

**“By 2015 will Israel be even more isolated by a hostile international community? Will those who seek Israel’s destruction feel emboldened by American ambivalence? Will Israel have been forced to fight yet another war to protect its citizens and its right to exist”**. These arguments of definition and qualities portray Israel as a benign, passive state isolated by a “hostile international community”, and would not be at war if she was not forced to do so in order to protect her citizens and right to exist. The argument is a compassion move and appeals to the audience’s *pathos*. The argument founds the nature of warfare on righteous grounds, portraying Israel as a state warring in self defense, constantly fighting to protect her citizens and right to exist under attack by “those who seek Israel’s destruction”. Again, America’s close ally Israel’s very existence is defined as endangered by what is vaguely defined as “a hostile international community” and “those” who might feel “emboldened by American ambivalence”. This underpins the image of America as protector of the meek state of Israel against a hostile international community, nobly aiding her ally in her struggle for survival.

Romney then asks whether **“In Afghanistan, after the United States and NATO have withdrawn all forces, will the Taliban find a path back to power? After a decade of American sacrifice in treasure and blood, will the country sink back to medieval terrors of fundamentalist rule and the mullahs again open a sanctuary**

**for terrorists**". Defining America's involvement in Afghanistan as a decade long "sacrifice in treasure and blood" portrays America as noble, and defines Afghanistan through negative lexicalization as a victim the US has rescued from a fundamentalist rule characterized by the terrors belonging to medieval and, hence, lesser developed, stagnant, more savage times. As it is hard to argue against the perks of escaping terror, fundamentalism and medieval times, this portrays the Afghans' alternative to an American presence in their country as highly undesirable. Subjecting the Afghan people to terrors portrays the Taliban as evil. Opposing Taliban to America hence places America in the opposite, good category. Insinuating that Afghanistan might "sink back" into these "medieval terrors" if America were to withdraw her troops appeals to the audience's sense of *pathos* and presents continued American presence in Afghanistan as a necessity.

In the following argument, Romney places Pakistan "**Next door**", to Afghanistan, thus giving the audience's concern for this country an air of everyday normalcy.

**"Pakistan awaits the uncertain future, armed with more than 100 nuclear weapons"**, defining it not as an aggressor, but as a threatened state anxiously awaiting the uncertain future. This implies a delicacy to the situation, possibly resulting in the deployment of 100 nuclear weapons unless handled correctly. Romney clarifies that **"The danger of a failed Pakistan is difficult to overestimate, fraught with nightmare scenarios"**, before specifying and singling out one such "nightmare scenario": **"Will a nuclear weapon be in the hands of Islamic Jihadists?"** Posing this question immediately after his last statement presents nuclear weapons in the hands of Islamic Jihadists as one of the worst imaginable nightmare scenarios, seeing as it is worth singling out. The importance of preventing such a scenario is hence defined. The argument appeals to the audience's *pathos*.

Romney introduces his future vision of US' relations with China with an argument of conjecture, stating that **"China has made it clear that it intends to be a military and economic superpower"**. He then poses the question: **"Will her rulers lead their people to a new era of freedom and prosperity or will they go down a darker**

**path, intimidating their neighbors, brushing aside an inferior American Navy in the Pacific, and building a global alliance of authoritarian states”.** In this, Romney separates China’s future into two mutually exclusive categories, where the first one, of China leading “their people to a new era of freedom and prosperity” is juxtaposed with the scenario of an inferior American Navy implicitly leading to China going down “a darker path”, building a global authoritarian alliance. An inferior American Navy is presented as irreconcilable with China leading their people to “a new era of freedom and prosperity”, at the same time as the argument defines China’s current era of one lacking freedom and lacking prosperity. It is thus implicit that in order to accomplish the preferable scenario of freedom and prosperity for the Chinese people, the American Navy must be strong. The argument entrenches the notion of the US-China state relationship as a relationship of “us” versus “them”, whereas at the same time portraying the Chinese people as a people currently deprived of their American values of freedom and prosperity. The negative lexicalization used to portray China further entrenches the division between the two countries.

**“Russia is at a historic crossroads”.** This is an argument of definition, creating a sense of urgency and imminent change in respect to the future of the Russian people. **“Vladimir Putin has called the breakup of the Soviet empire the great tragedy of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”.** This is an argument of conjecture, implicitly attributing a sense of Putin being quite keen on rebuilding the Soviet empire, seeing as he apparently perceives the fall of the Soviet empire as a “tragedy” overshadowing all other tragedies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as, for instance, the Second World War. Romney himself poses the question in his next sentence, asking: **“Will he try to reverse the tragedy and bludgeon the countries of the former Soviet Union into submission, and intimidate Europe with the levers of its energy resources?”** This is, again, a representation of an American adversary as repressive, barbaric and crude, using negative lexicalization such as “bludgeon”, “submission” and “intimidate” to describe Russia’s interaction with the other former Soviet Union Countries and Europe. The argument also depicts Russia as using its control over energy resources to *intimidate* Europe, rather than negotiating in a civilized manner.



**“To our South, will the malign socialism of Hugo Chavez’s Venezuela, in tight alliance with malign socialism of Castro’s Cuba, undermine the prospect of democracy in a region thirsting for freedom and stability and prosperity”.** This argument actively includes the audience in the “we” looking out across the borders of the United States of America at the situation to be dealt with. It outright defines socialism, as wielded by Chavez and Castro, as evil, and depriving the Venezuelan and Cuban peoples of democracy, freedom, stability and prosperity. It thus also implies that these countries currently have neither freedom, nor stability, democracy or prosperity, and states that the region thirsts for all of the above. This places Venezuela and Cuba in the category of victims in need of saving and hence adds to the list of states framed as aides.

Stating that **“Our border with Mexico remains an open sore”**, Romney continues the narrative of Obama’s policies as “feckless”. Characterizing the US’ border with Mexico as “an open sore” both gives it a quality of being unhealthy, damaged and vulnerable, whilst at the same time creating the sensation that urgent action to heal the sore is required. Romney further deliberates, asking **“Will drug cartels dominate the region adjoining the United States, with greater and greater violence spilling over into our country? Will we have failed to secure the border and to stem the tide of illegal immigrants? And will drug smugglers and terrorists increasingly make their way into our midst?”** This portrays the US as surrounded by enemies and dangers, using the images of “violence spilling over”, “stem the tide” and “increasingly make their way” to paint a picture of hitherto uncontrolled masses of danger on the brink of violently flooding the US from across the Mexican border. The argument appeals to the audience’s *pathos* in creating fear of how their relationship with their southern neighbor will become if Obama is allowed to continue his policies.

Romney concludes his string of futuristic scenarios as he sees them if Obama is reelected, stating **“This would be a troubling and threatening world for America. But it is not unrealistic. These are only some of the very real dangers that**

**America faces, if we continue the feckless policies of the past three years”.**

Romney defines his own suppositions as realistic, and the future as troubling and threatening if Obama is allowed to continue his policies. Romney emphasizes that the aforementioned scenarios are only some of the dangers awaiting, implying in fact that the picture painted of the future is an understatement. Obama’s “feckless” policies place him in sharp contrast to the positive wording of “clarity” and “resolve” used to describe Romney and the ideal leader of America.

**“But of course, it doesn’t have to be this way. This isn’t our destiny, it is a choice. We are a democracy. You decide. In this campaign for President, I will offer a very different vision of America’s role in the world and of America’s destiny”.**

This presents Obama’s policies as unnatural and keeping the US from fulfilling her destiny, stating that the United States has chosen to stray from its mission and destiny. It is in the voters’ hands if America gets back on track. Introducing this argument with the phrase “of course”, presents what follows as something the audience and the orator already knows as true. Romney uses the conjectural arguments “we are a democracy. You decide” to place the responsibility for choosing America’s foreign policy, and, according to his previous arguments, America’s role in the World, in the hands of the audience as an active part.

**“Our next President will face many difficult and complex foreign policy decisions. Few will be black and white”.** This is an argument of conjecture portraying Romney as a nuanced person.

Romney then proceeds to defining what guides him as **“one overwhelming conviction and passion”**, illustrating that to Romney, it is impossible not to follow the foreign policy he is about to present. He states: **“This century must be an American Century”**, defining what he means as: **“In an American Century, America has the strongest economy and the strongest military in the world. In an American Century, America leads the free world and the free world leads the entire world.”**

Romney then refers to the notion of the US as a deist republic, created as a part of God's divine plan, stating that **"God did not create this country to be a nation of followers. America is not destined to be one of several equally balanced powers. America must lead the world, or someone else will. Without American leadership, without clarity of American purpose and resolve, the world becomes a far more dangerous place, and liberty and prosperity would surely be among the first casualties."** This argument holds that America was created with a destiny and a universal mission, and, as such, should assume the role as the leader of the world. Romney defines American leadership and American purpose and resolve as qualitatively better than other kinds of leadership, purpose and resolve in stating that without these, the world will become a far more dangerous place. Moreover if the US does not fulfill its destiny as assigned by God, the world is doomed and the values of liberty and prosperity will suffer. This is an argument of both quality and definition, appealing to the audience's *pathos*. America is portrayed as leading with clarity purpose and resolve as opposed to the irrationality and suicidal fanatics that the enemy is portrayed as in earlier arguments. This, again, places America on the side of "good" in a dichotomous worldview.

**"Let me make this very clear. As President of the United States, I will devote myself to an American Century. And I will never, ever apologize for America".**

This argument adheres to the notion that America is exempt from international law on account of its virtue. In this lies that Romney sees America as an idea, country or set of policies exempt from the laws, rules and regulations applied to other countries, implying that America, according to Romney, should not be held accountable for her actions, *whatever they may be*.

**"Some may ask, "Why America? Why should America be any different than scores of other countries around the globe?"** This is an argument of place, stating what will be discussed in the following sections. It states that Romney is aware that

some may question America's exceptional role in the world, and implies that he has considered the question himself and found the answer.

**“I believe we are an exceptional country with a unique destiny and role in the world. Not exceptional, as the President has derisively said, in the way that the British think Great Britain is exceptional or the Greeks think Greece is exceptional. In Barack Obama's profoundly mistaken view, there is nothing unique about the United States”.** Romney here alludes that America is qualitatively better with a unique role in the world. Obama is linked to the notion that the US is exceptional only in so far as it is distinct. Also plays into the notion of America having a unique destiny and a preordained role as a leader of the world. This is what makes America special, and different from other countries. The argument labels Obama's statement as derisive, and also profoundly mistaken and hence infers that the United States in fact *is* exceptional in a different way than Great Britain is exceptional to the British or Greece is exceptional to the Greeks. The argument defines America as a country with a unique destiny and role in the world, opposing it to the rest of the world's countries, which consequently share relatively equal destinies and roles. The argument gives a flair of innovation to the American image and presents it as a country singled out for a purpose.

**“But we are exceptional because we are a nation founded on a precious idea that was birthed in the American Revolution, and propounded by our greatest statesmen, in our fundamental documents. We are a people who threw off the yoke of tyranny and established a government, in Abraham Lincoln's words “of the people, by the people, and for the people”.** This argument of definition again divides America as a “we” with a more moral fundament for her policies than the rest of the world by implying that the rest of the world is not founded on any precious idea. It defines and depicts the American people as having actively emancipated themselves from tyranny and having a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people”. As the American people is already portrayed as opposed to ‘them’, this implies a uniqueness to the American people and their government as possessing

ideal qualities which the rest of the world lack. The people actively establishing such a government alludes to the American people possessing a rational active as opposed to being enslaved by tyranny. Quoting Abraham Lincoln is an example of intertextuality, portraying Romney as an admirer of Lincoln and hence alluding that Romney share Lincoln's values. This appeals to the audience's sense of *pathos* and *ethos*.

Romney defines his “We” as **“a people who, in the language of our Declaration of Independence, hold certain truths self-evident: namely, that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. It is our belief in the universality of these unalienable rights that leads us to our exceptional role on the world stage, that of a great champion of human dignity and human freedom”**. This implies that the rest of the peoples of the world do not hold these values as self-evident as it is the American belief in the universality of these rights that places them as exceptional in the international political context. Defining the US and her role on the world stage as that of “a great champion of human dignity and human freedom” paints the picture that it is not merely America's role to build an empire but a vocation to spread universal values around the globe. It also states that America was *lead* to this role, due to her exceptional nature, and hence it is not a role that is *taken* by the US. The argument reaffirms the notion of “us” versus “them”.

Romney then uses a line of conjectural arguments to establish himself as a regular American with a familiarly regular American upbringing, and hence, as pertaining to the American “we” of exceptionally moral and God given values, sharing the responsibility of spreading these values internationally. He states: **“I was born in 1947, a classic baby boomer. I grew up in a world formed by one dominant threat to America: the Soviet Union and Communism. The “duck and cover” drills we learned in school during the Cuban Missile Crisis resulted from a threat by a known, identifiable enemy, with clear borders and established leaders. We needed spy planes to find the hidden missile bases in Cuba but we didn't need them to find Nikita Khrushchev. President Reagan could negotiate with Soviet**

**Premier Mikhail Gorbachev and sign treaties for which each side could be held accountable**". Then, stating **"And when we caught the Soviets cheating, we could bring the world's attention to their transgressions"** he portrays the un-American enemy as the one doing the transgressions, implying that the US would not cheat, as opposed to the enemy. This adds to the image of the US being honorable, as opposed to the enemy. Furthermore, defining the US as the one to "bring the world's attention to their transgression" implies that the world was on the side of America and its values, reaffirming the notion of the US as a world leader, condoned and supported by the rest of the world. Finally, the argument portrays the current forces countering America (and, implicitly, the world) as forces that cannot be negotiated with. Romney follows this up by defining the current situation facing America as chaotic, complex and threatening. He states: **"Today, our world is far more chaotic. We still face grave threats, but they come not from one country, or one group, or one ideology. The world is unfortunately not so defined. What America and our allies are facing is a series of threatening forces, ones that overlap and reinforce each other. To defend America, and to secure a peaceful and prosperous world, we need to clearly understand these emerging threats, grasp their complexity, and formulate a strategy that deals with them before they explode into conflict."** The argument ends by postulating that if America does not act and deal with the world's problems, the threats will explode into conflict. The argument places defending America and securing a peaceful and prosperous world in the same category and alludes to a foreign policy that needs to be dealt with actively and in an anti-isolationist manner. "Explode into conflict" implies an uncontrolled and violent scenario in contrast to the United States who has previously been defined in Romney's speech as the one state possessing purpose and resolve of a special clarity.

Romney then states **"It is far too easy for a President to jump from crisis to crisis, dealing with one hot spot after another"**, implying that this is what Obama has been doing in his foreign policy. This, however, is, according to Romney **"to be shaped by events rather than to shape events. To avoid this paralyzing seduction of action**

**rather than progress, a President must have a broad vision of the world coupled with clarity of purpose.”** Dealing with one hot spot after another is defined as action resorted to on the grounds of seduction, rather than rationality. Romney contrasts this to what progress led by a President with “a broad vision of the world coupled with clarity of purpose” – two qualities that Romney has attributed to himself and to the American leader, respectively. This argument thus further defines America, and Romney, as the favorable and rational leader of the world, and states that this leader must pursue an active foreign policy and actively seek to shape events. This places Romney’s candidature in a trend promoting interventionism, opposing it to what is implied as a passive and paralyzed foreign policy led by Obama.

**“When I look around the world, I see a handful of major forces that vie with America and free nations, to shape the world in an image of their choosing. These are not exclusively military threats. Rather, they are determined, powerful forces that may threaten freedom, prosperity, and America’s national interests”.** Romney here uses the first person singular pronoun to establish himself as an active agent, personally involved, looking around the world and reporting to the audience what he personally sees. Presenting the US’ opponents as “a handful of major forces” presents them as manageable, yet threatening enough to require active involvement in order to protect what they may threaten, defined in one single bulk as “freedom, prosperity, and America’s national interests”. America’s national interests is thus linked, but not equaled to, freedom and prosperity. Opposing America and her allies to major forces vying “to shape the world in an image of their choosing” further elaborates the dichotomous worldview of America and her allies against the rest, and implies that the “right” version of the future entails America shaping the world in an image of America’s choosing.

The first threat Romney presents in his rendition of the future is **“Islamic fundamentalism with which we have been at war since Sept. 11, 2001”**. This adversary has already been defined as evil, irrational and an enemy which cannot be negotiated with – seeing as no enemy these days can be negotiated with. The

argument of conjecture states that the US has been at war with this –ism since September 11, 2001, but does not open the question whether this is a just or necessary war, or not.

**“Second, the struggle in the greater Middle East between those who yearn for freedom, and those who seek to crush it”.** This falls into line with the dichotomous worldview of either/or scenarios dominating Romney’s speech. The people of “the greater Middle East” – an enormous geographically area – is divided into those who innocently “yearn for freedom” and those who, in an image depicting them as crude, violent and savage, “seek to crush it”. There is no middle ground. America’s enemies are again presented as being against what Romney has presented as universal values uniquely esteemed in America. Freedom “in the greater Middle East” is at stake, and the string of arguments implies that this is not just America’s business, it is of grave personal concern for Romney, who is the active observer of these events. The argument nourishes the interventionist idea, as it has previously been defined as America’s duty to defend freedom around the world.

**“The dangerous and destabilizing ripple effects of failed and failing states, from which terrorists may find safe haven.”** This argument of definition and quality portrays “failed and failing states” as a danger existing abroad, actualizing them and the terrorists who may find safe haven in them as relevant threats to the US, seeing as they are being presented in this context.

Romney then defines the regimes of Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and Cuba as having **“anti-American visions”** further establishing the notion of “America” being not just a country, but an idea or ideology, and that the mentioned states threatens the existence of this idea/ideology. Venezuela and Cuba have already been defined as “malign”, whereas Iran is depicted as irrational, violent, threatening and filled with suicidal fanatics through negative lexicalization. Characterizing these states first as malign and/or irrational and then as anti-American couples the ideas into a notion that anti-



Americanism is malign and irrational. Two of these states are, in Romney's conjectural argument, **"seeking nuclear weapons"**.

The forces threatening freedom, prosperity and America's national interests are further defined as including **"rising nations with hidden and emerging aspirations, like China, determined to be a world superpower, and a resurgent Russia, led by a man who believes the Soviet Union was great, not evil"**. This argument of quality plays into the dichotomous worldview of countries belonging to one of two categories; they are either "great", as the US has been labeled in this speech, or "evil", as the American opponents are labeled. The argument is based on intertextuality, referring Reagan's statement of the Soviet Union as an evil empire and contrasting Putin to this view. Repeating what Reagan already said reinforces the definition of the Soviet Union as evil and fortifies the image of Putin as an adversary of America.

Romney repeats the rhetorical measure of intertextuality, stating **"There is no one approach to these challenges. There is no Wall that the next President can demand to be torn down"**, referring to Reagan's famous quote "Mr. Gorbachev tear down this wall". He then states that **"there is one unifying thread that connects each of these possible threats: when America is strong, the world is safer"**.

The whole string of arguments refers to a hidden enemy, as opposed to the well defined enemies of the Cold War, yet still places the defined enemies of America firmly in the dichotomous worldview of good versus evil so actively deployed and cemented during the Cold War.

Romney then cites Ronald Reagan again, stating **"Ronald Reagan called it "Peace through Strength" and he was never more right than today"**. Romney elaborates this with an argument of definition, proclaiming that **"It is only American power—conceived in the broadest terms—that can provide the foundation of an international system that ensures the security and prosperity of the United States and our friends and allies around the world"** – thus reaffirming the idea that the

US is the natural, and needed, leader of the world due to exceptional qualities that she possesses.

According to Romney's next argument of definition, **"American strength rises from a strong economy, a strong defense, and the enduring strength of our values. Unfortunately, under this President, all three of those elements have been weakened"**. This implies that, conclusively, American strength has been weakened under President Obama. The argument shows the importance of domestic values in foreign policy, in creating a direct link between American values and American strength. In doing this, it also implies that American values are stronger than other values—they are enduring.

**"As President, on Day One, I will focus on rebuilding America's economy. I will reverse President Obama's massive defense cuts. Time and again, we have seen that attempts to balance the budget by weakening our military only lead to a far higher price, not only in treasure, but in blood."** This argument implies that Obama's defense cuts have lead to a higher price in treasure and blood, because he has weakened the American military. The whole argument shows Romney's plan to rebuild American strength, as he plans to both strengthen the American economy, and reverse Obama's defense cuts. Not stating what he will do with the third component of American strength, the American values, further underlines these as enduring and unchangeable.

Romney then goes on to specify that his **"strategy of American strength is guided by a set of core principles"**. He then reiterates his strategy for America's future foreign policy, numbering the following paragraphs and stating: **"First, American foreign policy must be prosecuted with clarity and resolve. Our friends and allies must have no doubts about where we stand. And neither should our rivals. If the world knows we are resolute, our allies will be comforted and those who wish us harm will be far less tempted to test that resolve."** Again, America is linked to the values of *clarity* and *resolve*. Deploying the verb *prosecute* to illustrate the execution

of these policies further underlines the image of America as a rational state. Romney opposes his foreign policy of clarity and resolve to that of Obama, implying that Obama's foreign policy was not characterized by clarity and resolve. This foreign policy of clarity and resolve is also contrasted by the image of America's enemies testing this resolve, simply because they are tempted to do so. This evokes the image of America as a father figure to the rest of the world.

**“Second, America must promote open markets, representative government, and respect for human rights. The path from authoritarianism to freedom and representative government is not always a straight line or an easy evolution, but history teaches us that nations that share our values, will be reliable partners and stand with us in pursuit of common security and shared prosperity.”** This defines reliable partnerships seeking common security and shared prosperity as the underlying motifs for America's mission to “promote open markets, representative government and respect for human rights”.

**“Third, the United States will apply the full spectrum of hard and soft power to influence events before they erupt into conflict. Resort to force is always the least desirable and costliest option. We must therefore employ all the tools of statecraft to shape the outcome of threatening situations before they demand military action. The United States should always retain military supremacy to deter would-be aggressors and to defend our allies and ourselves. If America is the undisputed leader of the world, it reduces our need to police a more chaotic world.”** This argument defines a world led by America as a more orderly, less chaotic world fraught with fewer conflicts, and promotes a proactive American foreign policy in order to ensure this.

**“Fourth, the United States will exercise leadership in multilateral organizations and alliances”,** because, according to Romney, **“American leadership lends credibility and breeds faith in the ultimate success of any action, and attracts full participation from other nations. American leadership will also focus**

**multilateral institutions like the United Nations on achieving the substantive goals of democracy and human rights enshrined in their charters. Too often, these bodies prize the act of negotiating over the outcome to be reached. And shamefully, they can become forums for the tantrums of tyrants and the airing of the world's most ancient of prejudices: anti-Semitism. The United States must fight to return these bodies to their proper role. But know this: while America should work with other nations, we always reserve the right to act alone to protect our vital national interests".** Again, the US is defined as the only worthy leader of the world, and a leader that the world needs, yearns for and happily fall into line for if asked by the US to do so. The UN is depicted as incapable at performing its own tasks and in want of American leadership, as this is the only leadership that can cure the unruly conditions currently defining the organization. US' enemies voicing their cause in the UN is defined as "tantrums of tyrants", whereas an American leadership of the UN will focus it on "achieving the substantive goals of democracy and human rights enshrined in their charters". This falls into line with the dichotomous worldview presented earlier in this speech, and portrays the US as morally superior, in stating that America "lends credibility and breeds faith in the ultimate success of any action". The UN is defined as sharing the same goals of democracy and human rights as the US but, as opposed to the US, the UN prizes negotiation over outcomes. Without the US as a leader these bodies are, according to Romney, incapable of returning to "their proper roles", as defined by Romney. The UN is thus defined as having lost its way. The US also reserves the right to not follow the rules and regulations of multilateral institutions if she chooses, defining her as exceptional and exempt from the international law the UN and other such "bodies" are meant to monitor.

**"In my first 100 days in office, I will take a series of measures to put these principles into action, and place America—and the world—on safer footing."**

This argument implies that a safer America is a safer world.

Romney then specifies some concrete measures he will take to place America and the world on a safer footing: **“Among these actions will be to restore America’s national defense”**, implying that Obama has not restored it, and that restoring it is essential for the nation’s security.

Romney then specifies further measures that he will enact once in office, before stating **“I will enhance our deterrent against the Iranian regime by ordering the regular presence of aircraft carrier task forces, one in the Eastern Mediterranean and one in the Persian Gulf region. I will begin discussions with Israel to increase the level of our military assistance and coordination. And I will again reiterate that Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon is unacceptable.”** This could be interpreted as a notion of the US as in a position to make judgments on Iran’s nuclear capabilities. However, it could also be meant as simply reiterating the US’ wish to restrain the development of more nuclear weapons.

**“I will begin organizing all of our diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one official with the authority and accountability necessary to train all our soft power resources on ensuring that the Arab Spring does not fade into a long winter.”** This implies that the Arabs need the assistance of America to ensure success in their own revolution, and sketches a heavily interventionist, active foreign policy where the US dictates the terms of success through “all [their] soft power resources”.

**“I will launch a campaign to advance economic opportunity in Latin America, and contrast the benefits of democracy, free trade, and free enterprise against the material and moral bankruptcy of the Venezuelan and Cuban model.”** This argument again defines the Venezuelan and the Cuban model as materially and morally bankrupt, and void of democracy, free trade and free enterprise, since Romney wishes to contrast these benefits to the current regimes in Venezuela and Cuba. The argument singles out Venezuela and Cuba among the Latin American states, implying that the rest of Latin America sides with the US. The argument further

depicts the US as having noble intentions in Latin America, and is thus an argument of quality.

**“I will order a full review of our transition to the Afghan military to secure that nation’s sovereignty from the tyranny of the Taliban. I will speak with our generals in the field, and receive the best recommendation of our military commanders. The force level necessary to secure our gains and complete our mission successfully is a decision I will make free from politics.”** This argument of definition states the tyranny of the Taliban, which also builds up under the dichotomous worldview dominating Romney’s speech.

**“And I will bolster and repair our alliances. Our friends should never fear that we will not stand by them in an hour of need. I will reaffirm as a vital national interest Israel’s existence as a Jewish state. I will count as dear our Special Relationship with the United Kingdom. And I will begin talks with Mexico, to strengthen our cooperation on our shared problems of drugs and security.”**

This image of Romney’s future politics defines the US’ relationship with Mexico in wholly new terms. When Mexico is mentioned in relation to Obama’s policies and the potential consequences of four more years of Obama, Mexico is described as an open wound. In relation to Romney, Mexico *shares* the problems of the United States, and cooperation is encouraged. The argument implies that under Obama’s policies the alliances have been weakened, especially the US’ relationship with Israel, in contrast to Romney who will strengthen these alliances.

Romney then declares **“This is America’s moment. We should embrace the challenge, not shrink from it, not crawl into an isolationist shell, not wave the white flag of surrender, nor give in to those who assert America’s time has passed. That is utter nonsense. An eloquently justified surrender of world leadership is still surrender.”** Again, the US is defined as the current leader of the world. The current moment is defined as belonging to America, and not seizing this moment is portrayed as cowardly defeat through negative lexicalization.

**“I will not surrender America’s role in the world. This is very simple: If you do not want America to be the strongest nation on Earth, I am not your President.”**

This defines America currently as the strongest nation on Earth, and states that if Romney is elected President America will continue to be the leader of the world and the strongest nation in the world. Stating next that **“You have that President today”**, Romney pins all the negative elements pointed out above on Obama, defining Obama as responsible for the decline of the United States.

**“The 21st century can and must be an American century. It began with terror, war, and economic calamity. It is our duty to steer it onto the path of freedom, peace, and prosperity. My hope is that our grandchildren will remember us in the same way that we remember the past generations of Americans who**

**overcame adversity, the generations that fought in world wars, that came through the Great Depression, and that gained victory in the Cold War. Let future generations look back on us and say, they rose to the occasion, they embraced their duty, and they led our nation to safety and to greatness.** This argument openly defines it as the United States duty/destiny to lead the 21<sup>st</sup> century world from terror and chaos to a path of freedom, peace and prosperity. America needs to assume its natural position in the world as world leader. Romney appeals to the audience’s *pathos* recapturing the history of great American success stories and relating them to their (him and the audience’s) grandchildren’s view of them and their actions. The argument also defines America as the winner of the Cold War, further enhancing the image of the US as champion of the world.

**“The Greatest Generation is passing. But as their light fades, we must seize the torch they carried so gallantly at such sacrifice. It is an eternal torch of decency, freedom and hope. It is not America’s torch alone. But it is America’s duty – and honor – to hold it high enough that all the world can see its light.”**

This alludes to the notion of America as a shining city on a hill, and states that the torch of all that is good is carried by the US to shine for the world to see. The torch is

not carried alone, implying that these are values that everyone strives for, but at which America excels, hence making her the natural moral leader of the world.

**“Believe in America.”** This refers to Romney’s campaign slogan, but also to the idea of America as a country, idea and people, not merely as a geographic area. Romney then ends his speech in the customary manner of public speeches in the US: **“Thank you, and God Bless the United States of America.”**

## **6.2 Ron Paul**

Ron Paul’s speech was held May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Exeter, New Hampshire, in the context of Paul announcing his running for president in the 2012 elections. The speech was held in front of Paul supporters and the audience responds twice to Paul’s speech with cheers and chants, making it more of a two-way communication situation than Romney’s strictly one-way communication speech. Paul’s speech is given in the context of the Republican primaries and as such should also be regarded as a propaganda speech, serving the purpose of legitimizing Paul’s policies. Paul’s sentences and syntax are sometimes invalid and incomplete, with the effect that several of his arguments prove also both invalid and incomplete. This is reflected in this analysis.

As Paul’s speech integrates domestic and economic policy with foreign policy, some arguments regarding domestic and economic policy are included in this analysis where these are integrated and relevant for his foreign policy discourse. The arguments strictly concerning domestic and economic policy and not contributing to Paul’s foreign policy discourse are excluded from this analysis, due to the scope of this thesis.



### 6.2.2 Presidential Campaign Announcement Speech

Like Romney, Paul introduces his speech politely by thanking the audience profusively. He specifically thanks a few of his collaborators personally by using their first names, possibly even nicknames, stating that he is **“very pleased to call Jim senator ... And Chris thank you for your efforts and I want to acknowledge all my special guests behind me”**. He concludes his introduction cementing himself and the audience as part of the same “we” and sharing the same goal, stating **“I am so delighted to see you involved in our revolution”**. Depicting his campaign as “our revolution” defines the audience as a part of the same movement Paul proponent. Paul’s delight in this appeals to the audience’s *pathos*, and defining the movement as a “revolution” connotes it to the historical event of the American Revolution. This revolution **“is spreading and the momentum is building”**. Paul elaborates: **“Our time has come”** further underlining Paul’s shared “we” with the audience, creating a sense of urgency and defining *this time* as *their time*, no one else’s time. “This time” has **“been around for a long time, but the momentum is here today”**, showing this revolution as a revolution rooted in the people over time. Paul then appeals to the audience’s *ethos*, humbly stating that the momentum is here **“not because of what I have done—I happen to have been in an important place and energized some, but it is necessary that the grassroots people understand what the issues are”**. This again implies that the revolution is rooted deeply in the people – the grassroots people – and states Paul’s concern with the people understanding what the current political issues are. This, again, increases his *ethos* as a genuinely concerned politician. Paul reiterates this, stating **“A generation of people need to know”**, and repeats that he is especially **“delighted that the young people are with us in this revolutionary spirit that we have”**. This defines Paul and his audience as sharing not just the same goal, but the same *spirit*, connecting them ever more tightly as part of the same spiritual “we”. The argument again creates connotations to the revolutionary spirit of the Founding Fathers. Connecting the audience and the Founding Fathers appeals to the audience’s *pathos*.

Paul then further expresses his faith in his audience and the American people, appealing to the audience's *pathos* in acknowledging all the work that has been done, singling out **"the intellectual work"** and stating that he is **"convinced that a nation does not change just for partisan political reasons. What has to happen is there has to be an intellectual revolution to energize people and get people to understand the problems from economic and political terms as well as foreign policy"**. This is defined by Paul as **"what has been happening now for quite a few decades"**, again portraying Paul's "revolution" as a movement deeply rooted in the American people. Paul then notes that **"There's quite a bit of difference about attitudes about economics and foreign policy today than there was in 1976 when I was first elected"**. This shows that he recognizes the change in attitudes in the American people during this time and establishes him as a concerned and experienced politician, reminding the audience that he has already been elected, thus augmenting his *ethos* as an eligible candidate. Then stating that **"There's a big difference"**, the "revolution" is further portrayed as a force major in the making, and the force of this revolution is, again, attributed to **"a lot of work from a lot of people"** in an appeal to the audience's *pathos*. The following argument consists of a syntactically flawed sentence; **"And now that so many people in this country have come to understand that government so far in its pretense that it can take care of us from cradle to grave and police the world, it is so evident to this growing number of people that government isn't the solution—government really has created the problems"**. However, ignoring the lack of syntax, the argument is successful in evoking an implication that the American government *pretends* to be able to solve all the American people's problems, as well as defining government as not the solution, but the very cause of "the problems" riding America.

Paul proceeds to defining the burst of the housing bubble as **"a predictable event"**, increasing his *ethos* by implying that he knew the bubble would burst, and that the government has failed the people in not coping with this predictable even. **"And because of all this they have come together and people are now listening to this**

**revolutionary spirit that is spreading across this country**". This argument gives credence to Paul's views because they right about the issue of the housing bubble, and reiterates the definition of the movement he is a part of as "a revolutionary spirit that is spreading across this country". New Hampshire is then defined as "**a very special state, because there is so high respect for the spirit of liberty here**". This appeals to the audience's *pathos*, at the same time as defining them as a people with a high respect for the spirit of liberty – an indisputably flattering characterization – again appealing to the audience's *pathos*. This high respect for the spirit of liberty is what makes it extra pleasant for Paul to "**once again [be] able to say that [he is] a candidate for the presidency in the Republican Party primary**". This further augments the audience's sense of *pathos*, as well as Paul's *ethos* in showing his high esteem of these indisputably positive values.

Paul then again refers to his long experience as elected politician and states that the conditions "**certainly**" have "**changed, even from four years ago**", elaborating that the '08 election especially "**did not make all of us who believe in liberty all that happy**". This again defines Paul and his group as proponents of liberty, and Obama, as winner of the '08 election, as less beneficial for the cause of liberty. He then reiterates that he is "**convinced that the spirit of liberty is alive and well in New Hampshire**", again appealing to the audience's *pathos*, defining them as infused by the spirit of liberty and unifying himself particularly to this particular audience.

Paul then proceeds to reference "**generically what [he] think[s] a president should be able to do and should do**". Defining American commonplaces, he outlines that all Americans (him included) want a strong president, stating "**One thing the American people want, and I agree with them, they want a strong president. There is no doubt about that**". He then poses the rhetorical question "**where should those strengths be directed? Should the strength of the president be directed toward building the TSA and homeland security and policing the world?**" to which the audience replies "No!". This argument implies that the current president is directing

his strengths toward building the TSA (Transportation Security Administration), homeland security and policing the world, and that this is opposed to what Paul then states should be the direction of **“the strength and the character of the individual”**, namely **“standing up for freedom, standing up for liberty and restraining government”**. This portrays standing up for freedom, liberty and restraining government as every individual’s responsibility, defining every individual as a politically active and responsible citizen equal to the President. The argument thus alludes to the notion that any American citizen can become President; all Americans are created equal. Finally, the argument defines freedom and liberty as naturally connected to a restrained government.

After stating his position regarding **“the drug issue”** and civil liberties, Paul then goes on to state that **“basically most Americans believe in the First Amendment and say that we have a right to talk about controversial issues”**, elaborating that **“the First Amendment [...was...] written so that we can discuss controversial issues and actually read very controversial and very dangerous literature, especially the literature that promotes big government and welfarism and socialism and all the mess”**. This is another example of negative lexicalization. Defining literature that “promotes big government and welfarism and socialism and all the mess” as “very dangerous literature” underlines Paul’s view on these issues, and places them all in one category opposed to what he believes in. He reiterates this, stating **“all of the sudden people have lost respect for liberty, the understanding of liberty”**, implying that the respect for and understanding of liberty must be restored.

Paul takes **“a strict, a strict constitutional position”**, and uses the following arguments to define the Constitution as a document more than sufficient at guiding all aspects of American domestic, educational, economical and foreign policy. Among these arguments, Paul proclaims that **“what we should be guaranteeing is the protection of freedom of choice”**, exemplifying that **“For instance, your right to take things into your body, such as nutritional substances, should never be**

**regulated by the federal government and absolutely never regulated by the United Nations**". This conveys the notion that the UN regulating details within the US domestic policies is even worse than the federal government regulating them.

To Paul, **"It's better to defend the position that says you do have freedom of choice what you do with your body, but you also have to have responsibility for what you do, and if you do harm to yourself, you can't go crawling to the government to penalize your neighbor to take care of you"**. In connection to Paul's previous depiction of all American citizens as individuals equally responsible as the President for standing up for freedom, liberty and restraining government, this idea resonates the individualistic idea of being responsible for one's own welfare if given freedom of choice, and this is how Paul prefers things to be. In contrast to being responsible for your own actions; looking to the government to resolve issues is characterized by Paul as crawling.

To Paul, **"this position of the government controlling all those decisions"** is **"detrimental to progress in medicine"**. Furthermore, he substantiates his faith in the ability of human kind to make the best decisions for themselves if given full freedom of choice using the example that **"heroin at one time in our history was legalized and there was essentially no abuse of it, and it's only in our recent history"**. He then reiterates this sentiment plainly, saying **"I do want people to make choices [...]** **People make decisions and they make good decisions for the most part. But what I don't like is when government makes the decisions and it violates the principles of liberty. [...]** **So when they challenge you and want to paint a negative picture, stick to your guns, defend liberty, defend the free choices, defend our Constitution, defend states' rights"**.

Paul then again refers to his long experience in politics, stating that since 1976 he has held the same position of disregard for **"the federal agencies breathing down our**

**neck and regulating our property even under the guise of they're there to take care of us and help us".** This again reiterates his distrust in the government, implying that the government is not there to help the people, but is, in fact, guided by another, more sinister agenda. The reason he has kept this stance, is his **"understanding of the Constitution and economic and moral policy"**, defining "moral" as a quality pertaining to a certain type of policy.

By saying that he personally would not want the taxpayers to pay for it if his hypothetical beach house were to be wrecked by a natural disaster, Paul then augments his *ethos* in an argument defining the federal government's insurance programs as outright causing **"moral hazard"**, as opposed to private insurance of free markets economics and law, which places the responsibility for paying for one's own property solely with the owner of the property, not with the state and thus the tax payers.

**"In other ways, our society and our country's been great"**. This argument defines both the American society and the American country as "great", separating them from the government. The American people is defined as having **"been very generous when people really get hurt. Not only in this country we go to help people, but around the world. I mean when there are earthquakes and other things we as a people have been very, very generous"**. In this, Paul shows that he is not opposed to helping people, also internationally. This, however, is a luxury the Americans can no longer afford, according to Paul's next argument; **"I'll tell you what. That's going to end because our economic policies in this country is destroying our wealth. We're not going to have any money hardly to take care of ourselves let alone help the world"**. This introduces a non-interventionist foreign policy as an economic necessity – to Americans today, the choice according to Paul is either help the world, *or* have enough money to take care of themselves. So much so, that even if they stop helping earthquake victims around the globe, they still might not have enough money to properly take care of themselves.

Paul then states that he is **“convinced that you think things through you can figure out how the free market and sound economic policy and sound morality and the Constitution will help us [sic]”**. This appeal the audiences sense of *pathos* by defining the audience as accomplices and sharing in Paul’s understanding of how these policies can help America.

Paul then defines himself as **“so radical that [he] want[s] to go back to the Constitution and have a foreign policy which is a pro-American foreign policy and not do the things that we're not authorized to do”**. This entails a view that the current foreign policy is not pro-American, and doing things America is not authorized to do. Basing his view on what the Constitution attributes as American responsibilities appeals to the audience’s sense of *logos*. Paul opposes his wish for a pro-American foreign policy to the views of other politicians, **“including many Republicans”** who have **“drifted over to the assumption that we have to be the policeman of the world”**. To Paul, the role of world police is hence not America’s destiny, rather, it is an alluring assumption attracting support solely due to what Paul refers to as **“the status quo”**. Policing the world is implied as being undemocratic and against the will of the American people, as Paul states, **“Now I don't think the American people ever fully endorsed that idea”**.

Paul then goes on to propound the argument of “trade, not aid (or war)”, stating that **“if you believe in freedom of choice, you believe in trading with other people, believing that you have the right to buy goods from anybody you want. It's your money. Why can't you buy the cheap goods? And so you don't have to be an isolationist, it just means that we stay out of the internal affairs and all the conflicts and the civil wars and the religious civil wars especially going on in the Middle East”**. In this, Paul appeals to the audience’s *logos* and defines the freedom of choice as including the right to trade with whomever each single American might

choose, without being labeled isolationist. This portrays the freedom to trade freely as independent of ideological labels and gives it an air of naturally being a universal right. Paul likens this free trade to staying out of other countries' internal affairs, conflicts, civil wars and especially the religious civil wars going on in the Middle East. Paul believes that the US does not **"have to be involved in that"**, and thinks American involvement in the aforementioned areas both makes her more enemies, and **"is bringing [her] down financially"**. These two arguments are the basis for Paul's appeal for **"a new foreign policy"**.

Paul then connects 9/11 to what he defines as **"bad policy"**, stating that **"when bad policy brings bad events to ourselves, such as what happened on 9/11, it's very difficult to say oh you know if we wouldn't have had that foreign policy that we had, we wouldn't be under such attack"**. This, however, is exactly what Paul implicitly is saying, implying that American interventionist foreign policy is qualitatively bad, seeing as the current foreign policy paradigm in America is interventionist. The reason why this link cannot be made in the American public discourse, is given as **"because we have been attacked, there are limits"**. This implies that the foreign policy debate following 9/11 was not free, but rather marked by a censorship rendering such reflections unspeakable. The former foreign policy thus had an adverse effect on what has been defined by Paul as the most important values of all; those of liberty and freedom – more specifically, freedom of speech. Paul still concedes that **"No matter how many mistakes we make in the past when a country's attacked a president and a country and the Congress should respond. So for that reason, I did respond by voting for the authority in 2001 to go after the individuals involved and responsible and go and get the Al Qaeda and gave that authority"**. Paul thus defends why he voted for the authority to go after bin Laden. However: **"what happened was the authority was abused. Matter of fact it was abused and ignored. The authority to go after bin Laden was ignored at Tora Bora. bin Laden was allowed to get off the hook and escape"**. This implies a deception on behalf of the state of America, separating Paul from the



fellow politicians he supported in going after bin Laden. Paul alludes to the government carrying this deception further, stating flippantly **“At the same time, oh we didn't worry about it too much; we decided well maybe they're Al Qaeda. Or at least they said there is Al Qaeda, and there are nuclear weapons aimed at us, so we have to go in and fight this war in Iraq”**. Paul here first refers how “we”, meaning America including him, first *decided* “well maybe they’re Al Qaeda”, implying that America constructed a pretext and consciously deceived its own people in order to go to war. Paul then modifies this statement placing himself outside the group constructing this pretext before listing the threats the American government has portrayed in order to go to war in Iraq. The whole argument portrays the American government as deceptive and possessing ulterior motifs to going to war in Iraq than what has been communicated to the American people. This hence implies the current American foreign policy of being marked by a democratic deficit.

Paul next summarizes the outcome of these specific “bad policies” in a string of arguments of conjecture, appealing both to the audience’s *logos* and *pathos*; **“Ten years of thousands of our people being killed, tens of thousands having been wounded with serious injuries. Believe me, there's information coming out now that the Persian Gulf War Syndrome with the first Persian Gulf War, which took them a long time to acknowledge, is going to have massive number of people with those conditions coming back. Head injuries. We have a big, big problem on our hands. And that's a cost. Trillions of dollars, thousands of lives, casualties that we have and to go after a group of people who deserved to be gone after, but the cost, as far as I'm concerned was way too high”**. Again, Paul separates himself and his audience from the government of America, calling the latter “they” and “them” and opposing them to “we” and “our” as receivers of the bill from the wars. Again, America’s interventionist foreign policy is portrayed as an economic problem costing way too many American lives. Stating that it took *them* “a long time” to acknowledge the Persian Gulf War Syndrome implies that Paul and his followers acknowledged this syndrome much sooner, and hence has a better understanding of the real costs of

going to war. This appeals to the audience's *logos* in listing the real costs of war, and to their *pathos* in specifying how many of their own kind have been killed in these wars. He concludes this paragraph defining the costs of these wars as "way too high", appealing to the audience's *ethos*.

Next, Paul claims **"Though I supported that authority, I had deep reservations with fear that it would be misused"**, before defending why he could still vote in favor of the authority: **"therefore I was looking around for another option, and that is when I reviewed what I've learned about the Constitution and they have a provision in the Constitution that maybe we can have a narrow defined war"**.

This appeals to the audience's *ethos* and portrays Paul as a cautious man, wary of government, who does not vote in favor of going to war easily, without making absolutely sure that it is legal and in accordance with the American values stated in the Constitution. Paul elaborates the options of warfare provided by the Constitution, appealing to the audience's *logos* with a string of conjectural arguments – again including himself in the group going to war: **"Since we can't declare war against a government when it's a band of criminals that are attacking us, that is when they provided the principle of a letter of Marque and Reprisal<sup>3</sup>. And that is target the enemy, go after them, and get them"**. Paul provides a **"good example of how this might work"** in **"what Ross Perot did. When he had some of his employees taken into hostage in Iran, he didn't go to the federal government and say go in, attack and declare war. What he did, he got some special forces retiree, he got his people in there, he went in and got them out and brought them out"**. Paul invokes the Constitution to solve the problem of being attacked by criminals instead of a nation. This argument promotes the notion that the American people should be

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<sup>3</sup> Letters of Marque and Reprisal are "papers from a belligerent government authorizing privately owned vessels, commonly known as privateers, to engage in warfare against enemy commerce. The Constitution gives Congress power to 'grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water' (Article I, Section 8)[...] Among European nations privateering was abolished by the Declaration of Paris (1856). It was practiced only briefly by the South in the Civil War, and in subsequent years the destruction of enemy commerce has been limited to government owned vessels" (Westcott 1976: 256)

uniquely free to commit acts of war in other countries and be exempt from involving the American government, and exempt from international law.

In an argument of conjecture appealing to the audience's *logos*, Paul defends this view: **"if this principle had been ingrained in our system and we had used it, we could have well paid \$500 million or a billion dollars to capture the individuals that were responsible [...] compared to the trillions of dollars that we're involved in now"**.

Paul's next sentence is syntactically incomplete, yet still defines America's foreign policy as in part consisting of occupying countries and killing civilians: **"Not only do I see some of that as a conflict in not doing well, every time we occupy a country, every time we kill a civilian. And it continues. When we lob these bombs into Pakistan, civilians get killed too"**. Paul then portrays the people America is warring against as normal human beings with the same rational reactions that Americans have; **"They get angry at us. What would we do if that happened?"**. This appeals to the audience's *pathos*, reminding them that it could be the other way around, and to their *logos*, giving the reason for why Pakistani people might be angry at Americans. Paul then again implies that his own government is deceiving its people, saying **"They say there's maybe Taliban in there; we have to go and get them"**. He then differentiates between the Taliban and the Al Qaeda, appealing to the audience's sense of *logos* and *ethos*, showing himself as a man not prone to go to war based on assumptions and generalizations; **"The Taliban is not the Al Qaeda"**. Furthermore, the Taliban are portrayed as a rational adversary, responding to what Paul defines as a foreign, namely American, occupation in an understandable, predictable way. In fact, Paul reminds his audience that the American government once supported the Taliban in resisting occupation by another country: **"The Taliban are a group of people who are very determined that they don't want any foreign occupation. That's their religious and political belief. And we joined them when they were so annoyed with the Soviets occupying Afghanistan, but we were on the side of those who**

**said no occupation”**. Paul reminds his audience that, seeing as America has changed views on the Taliban **“it shouldn't be so unusual for us to come to the conclusion that if we're involved over there that they wouldn't turn on us, and that certainly is what happened”**. This portrays American involvement in Afghanistan as less than moral, implying deceit and double standards on behalf of the American government.

Paul then further elaborates on Pakistan as an example of what he defines as **“the futility”** of current American foreign policy, appealing to the audience’s sense of *logos* and *pathos*. He uses no euphemisms; **“We're lobbing bombs into Pakistan, innocent people are getting killed, maybe a Taliban member is killed whose only argument is that he wants his country back, and at the same time we give them billions of dollars. I mean we give them money”**. Paul thus depicts the Pakistani people as ordinary, innocent people being killed by US bombs. This appeals to the audience’s *pathos* and paints an image of America’s war as immoral and unjust, as it kills civilians, but only “maybe” kills one of the proclaimed enemies. This proclaimed enemy is, at that, portrayed as fighting for a just cause, thus having a valid argument for fighting the US. This appeals to the audience’s *logos* – and the contention that “maybe a Taliban member is killed” serves to underline the futility and randomness of outcome of the American war. Paul continues: **“I used to say that you know our problem in this country is we have only two foreign policies. One, if they do what we tell them, we give them money. If they don't do what we tell them, we bomb them. In this case, we're doing both. So there is a lot of room for a sensible, common sense foreign policy, and it goes back to the Constitution”**. This argument paints a picture of the United States and her foreign policy as crude, simple and nonsensical, either bribing or bombing their will across around the world. Again, Paul advocates the principles of foreign policy outlined in the Constitution as a preferable alternative to current foreign policy.

In sum, this policy is defined by Paul as not only **“a detriment to us militarily and for our national security, it's a great detriment to us economically”** and, appealing

to the audience's *logos*, he deliberates: **“emphasizing big cuts overseas you could alleviate some of these [domestic economic] problems in a political way that would be more, more acceptable”** than cutting **“medical care for the children”**. This argument thus appeals also to the audience's *pathos*.

Paul then deliberates that the economic recession is **“going to get worse”**, before linking the current foreign policy to America's economic problems yet again; **“This foreign policy is related because it's a significant amount of our spending”**. In the following arguments, Paul discusses America's printing of money and predicts a coming inflation, continuing to separate the audience from their government referring to the government as “they” and to the audience as “you”. Stating that **“As a matter of fact it's a deliberate policy of the Federal Reserve to depreciate the currency”** further exacerbates the image of the government as untrustworthy, culminating in Paul's definition of their praxis as qualitatively **“dishonest, it's immoral, it's unconstitutional and the reason why we ought to get rid of the Federal Reserve”**. The American people should avoid having a central bank firstly because **“It isn't authorized in the Constitution”**. Naming this as the first reason for prohibiting central banks underlines Paul's notion of the sanctity of the Constitution. The one issue that **“really is dangerous to our cause of liberty”** is the devaluation of the currency, defined by Paul as qualitatively **“immoral”**, caused by that the central banks **“allows the expansion of government”**. This again portrays government as the antithesis of liberty, connecting liberty to anti-statism domestically as in foreign policy. Furthermore, a growth in government is, ultimately, a **“growth of government to fight wars that we shouldn't be in”**. This defines America's wars as unjust. The Federal Reserve and American monetary policy's role in swindling the American people is further exasperated by a conjectural argument, stating: **“One bank got bailed out and guess who was one-third owner? Gadaffi was one third owner in the bank, and we went over there and bailed them out”**. This argument also implies that American monetary policy makers either does not know the extent of their political decisions, or that they do not care, or that they are not in a position to

exclude a bank from being bailed out by them, even if it is owned one-third by a sworn opponent of America. The argument thus underlines what Paul defines as the futility and randomness of outcome, also internationally, of the current American policy.

In sum, to Paul, **“this is the reason that we should direct our interest to the preservation of liberty, to the people in this country and taking care of ourselves”**. He deliberates: **“Be prosperous, set a good example and others will want to emulate us. We cannot spread our goodness with a gun, and using a gun violates our goodness”**. This argument takes for granted that the Americans are a qualitatively “good” people and insinuates that the American goodness is a (different) kind of goodness that is worth spreading to the world. The argument again negates the utility of spreading good values by use of force.

In the next argument, it is unclear whether Paul refers to domestic policy, foreign policy or both. He states: **“Liberty should be our cause. I believe for myself all political activity is for the promotion of liberty with a deep conviction that liberty and freedom is not perfect. It will not solve all our problems, but it will do more good than all the government intervention in the world”**. This argument nonetheless assumes that liberty needs to be spread, yielding that neither liberty nor freedom is perfect or the solution to all problems. It is, however, unequivocally preferable to government intervention, according to Paul. He elaborates **“I like the word intervention. I don’t like to have a government that is an intervener [...] and we don’t tell other countries what to do with their problems either”**. This again clarifies that, in Paul’s view, America has no role as world police. Simultaneously, the argument depicts other countries as just as capable of solving their problems as the American people is of solving American problems. The US and the rest of the countries of the world are thus presented as equals.

Paul then declares that when defining what a president should do, he wants to **“firmly and courageously stand up to those who want to do more. They use an authoritarian approach, and when they do, everything that they do it undermines your personal liberty”**. This, in turn, **“undermines everything that was good and great about America”**. Using the past tense implies that America is not as good and great as it used to be, although Paul concedes **“We were never a perfect nation. We don't have a perfect document, but I'll tell you what. We had the best”**. This qualitatively defines the Constitution as the best document every written, albeit not perfect. It also implies that the Constitution is less used and adhered to today than it ought to be in Paul's view. Referring to America's great past, Paul continues: **“We were the most prosperous ever. And there's still a lot of spirit left in this country”**. This appeals to the audience's *pathos* and ends the argument with an installment of hope in the capabilities and spirit of the American nation.

Paul then again defines himself and his audience as **“our group who are saying, we've had enough; what we want is we want our freedom back”**. This implies that the freedom that the American nation was built on has been lost. Hence, the current regime threatens one of the fundamental ideas of America. Paul states that the **“very important reason”** why he works so hard for personal liberty is for all – **“It's for myself, it's for my family, my friends, my neighbors and our country”**. This augments his *ethos*, at the same time as portraying Paul as an ordinary American with sound American values of holding family, friends, neighbors and country dear. To Paul, having liberty leads to prosperity, defining the cause for liberty a truly **“humanitarian argument, because the other side, they do not produce. But more importantly, I think a free society offers tremendous opportunities [...] Gives us the time and the wealth to release more creative energies. And it's in these creative energies—Then we can deal with our problems, whether it's our personal habits, whether it has to do with our economic conditions and helping other people or whether its dealing with other countries”**. “Dealing with other countries” here portrays these other countries as equals to the US Paul continues,

professing what will come if America sticks with the Constitution and her founding principles; **“We will have, have the wealth. And with this effort, then we can work on our own imperfections to improve ourselves, to work on becoming more virtuous and more compassionate and this is the society that I want to live in”**.

This defines America as less than perfect, with a potential to get closer to perfection, in Paul’s view here exemplified by becoming more virtuous and more compassionate. Singling out these two indisputably positive traits as especially desirable appeals both to the audience’s *pathos*, and augments Paul’s *ethos* in stating that this is the kind of society that he wants to live in. This goal is defined by Paul as **“a very important goal”, “regardless of what happens”**. This augments Paul’s *ethos*, implying that he is a man guided by virtue and not political ambition.

Paul concludes his speech by stating that he is **“so pleased to see what's happening in the country, not only the interest in the Federal Reserve and the foreign policy but the interest and the understanding of liberty”**. This especially regards young people, who are being attributed by Paul with an understanding of **“what they're getting, and [...] that something different has to be done”**. This argument appeals to the audience’s *pathos* and installing them with hope for the future. Paul concedes, **“No matter what happens in the next election, this cannot be changed immediately”**, before declaring his devotion to democracy by stating that **“It can only be changed—one individual can't do it—it can only be changed if the people endorse the changes and our representatives, they get sent to our legislatures, understand it, and do it”**. Paul then refers to his extensive experience in politics, as well as his dedication to *logos*, recounting **“When I first started, I had difficulties in the 1950s even finding the literature. I had an inclination to study and read, but it took a long time. There was no Internet; the books were hard to find”**. Proving that he is still up to date and still learning, he then states that **“Today it is so great to use the Internet to find out what's going on. More think tanks than ever before. And also, if I need a book now, I can get it in about five, ten seconds off Amazon and off the Internet and it's in my house the next day”**. He infuses his



audience with an extra dose of optimism proclaiming **“So big things are happening and we have to take that and use it. Use it for a just cause and that just cause is promoting the greatness of America and promoting individual liberty in our country”**. Paul thus defines promoting the greatness of America as a “just” cause, although it is unclear whether he proposes the promotion of American greatness abroad or at home. The other “just” cause concluding Paul’s speech is the promotion of individual liberty, confined to the American country. Paul ends his speech by thanking the audience again.

## 7 Discussion

As noted by Morgenthau (1978:558): “The rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational”. In line with this view, both candidates’ speeches are laden with appeals to the audiences’ *ethos* and *pathos*, while only a few arguments appeal to the audiences’ *logos* directly. Paul appeals more to the audience’s sense of *logos* than Romney, referring almost all his political choices to the Constitution and basing much of his argumentation against interventionism on the economic costliness of this for the American people. Paul’s speech is also practically void of euphemisms, whereas Romney’s speech is marked by an extensive use of euphemisms. Romney for example portrays American intervention as keeping Afghanistan from sinking back “into the medieval terrors of fundamentalist rule”, whereas Paul characterizes American intervention in Pakistan as “lobbing bombs into Pakistan” killing civilians. The effect is that Paul’s speech appears more factual, honest and down to earth, whereas Romney’s appears more idealistic and grandiose.

Romney’s speech is thoroughly syntactically valid, whereas Paul’s speech is strongly marked by features normally characterizing an informal conversation such as colloquial jargon and invalid syntax. The effect of this is that Romney’s speech appears more elaborate, practiced, performed and more meticulously written, whereas Paul’s speech gives an air of being Paul’s thoughts on the matter he is discussing,

presented as a stream of consciousness based loosely on an itinerary of what he wishes to express his views on.

American exceptionalism presumes a belief in the universality and superiority of American values and institutions. Both Paul and Romney base their respective policies on the notion that American values are superior, and that it is through adhering to what is truly *American* the nation can prosper and exist peacefully in a chaotic world. The speeches portray two vastly different approaches to foreign policy, yet both legitimize their respective stances through invoking the raw materials of history and culture, appealing to the American heritage of myths, values and traditions. Huntington (2004:24) notes that identities necessitate the notion of an external other. Both candidates legitimize their arguments around the notion that *their* policies are truly *American*, in contrast to a constructed un-American *Other*. This un-American *Other* either does not yet possess American values, does not agree with them or actively seeks to destroy them. Establishing what constitutes the “we” and the “they” of the policies discussed is prevalent in both speeches. Being *American* is defined as sharing a belief in the superiority and universality of certain American values such as liberty, free markets and democracy. Consequently *the Other* can be identified as un-American, projecting the identity of these *Others* as not sharing in the American values and hence alienating them and rhetorically depriving the two groups of any shared foundation of moral understanding. Even though Paul, Romney and different members of the audience might define each single “American” value differently, defining the *Other* as un-American still alienates the *Other* from each individual American in the audience. The definition of the *Other* as un-American thus appeals to people belonging to a broad spectrum of differing political views, uniting them in being opposed to this un-Americanism and giving them a common cause or a common opponent: the un-American *Other*. In accordance with Lippman’s (1922:132) rationale, un-Americanism thus becomes a protosymbol unifying a group of potentially vastly differing political opinions, even though the notion of “un-Americanism” is impossible to scrutinize and define as having the same meaning for every single American. The division of the world in peoples sharing American values,

and those who can be identified as “un-American” also infuses the *Other* with the quality of being a group (currently) morally irreconcilable with the American identity, and hence portraying them as less sympathetic or in need of moral guidance and aid. Accordingly, both candidates spend several arguments defining various *Others* as un-American.

As noted by Huntington (1982:18), “American foreign policy should also be substantively directed to the promotion of those values in the external environment”, reflecting why both candidates spend so much of their speeches relating their views of interventionism and anti-interventionism to the American values. In pursuing interventionism, Romney adheres most strongly to the missionary branch of American exceptionalism, incorporating some exemplarist views, whereas Paul largely follows the exemplarist branch with only a few missionary elements in his advocacy of anti-interventionism. The foreign policy projections of Paul and Romney should hence not be separated into a strict dichotomy, where they are exclusively defined as exemplary and missionary respectively. Both candidates state the promotion of American values as in the nation’s interest.

## **7.1 Paul**

Paul bases his foreign policy stance on the idea that the government’s policies both domestically and abroad are un-American. Paul’s speech expresses a thoroughly anti-statist view and constructs an image of the government as the un-American *Other*, frequently employing negative lexicalization in reference to the government. He implies that the government is deceitful and lying to their own people and suggesting that the government wants its people to “crawl” to them for help. Paul appeals to the audience’s *pathos* referring to the events of 9/11, but uses this appeal and argument to logically illustrate why “they” (again referring to the government) curtailed the public debate, in effect censoring their own people and hence violating the Constitutionally protected freedom of speech. The “we” on the other hand is depicted as wanting its lost freedom back; the freedom that has been taken from them by big government. Paul thus implies that the government keeps the American people subdued, again

invoking the notion of un-Americanism and strengthening the image that a revolution, his revolution, is both needed and justified. By portraying the government as the *Other*, and as violating American values, Paul, as the opponent of this type of government, seems more American and hence, as a more legitimate representative of the American people.

Paul also states that the election of 2008 “did not make all of us who believe in liberty all that happy”, implying that the current government is against liberty. The current administration is thus further defined as un-American in its adherence to what Paul defines as un-Constitutional policies, infringing on individual rights and liberties both domestically and abroad and being the ones “producing the problems”. He contrasts the notions of freedom, liberty and restraining government to TSA, homeland security and policing the world. The wars the U.S. are engaged in were, according to Paul, never declared by Congress and as such were never authorized by the people. This portrays the American government as also violating the American value of democracy. Paul defines the current policies as being un-American in not being authorized by the Constitution, as well as creating more enemies and economical problems for the American people, and depriving other peoples of their liberty by occupying them. Paul thus also includes other nations in his “we”, in depicting Pakistani people, and even the Taliban, as reacting in the same way as Americans would under the same circumstances, and sharing the same wishes as Americans, namely keeping their country free from occupation and retaining their liberty. He appeals to the audience’s sense of *pathos* and holds that America should *not* intervene in “other countries’ business”, defining the respective other countries not as U.S.’ adversaries, but as normal peoples more capable of managing their own problems than the U.S. will be at managing them. He connects this to “especially” staying out of the Middle East, as opposed to Romney, who actively proposes even more intervention in the greater Middle East. The “enemy” in Paul’s speech is thus big government, no matter which country you are from and what this governmental intervention consists of – bombs in foreign countries or taxes domestically. To Paul, big government is both un-constitutional and, consequently, un-American. Moreover Paul solidifies his

anti-interventionist stance claiming that “We cannot spread our goodness with a gun, and using a gun violates our goodness”– defining “American goodness” as a norm guiding American actions. This entails the norm as having a constitutive effect, laying out the rules for what is acceptable behavior in accordance with the specific identity of being American. Paul thus refers to un-Americanism both in the sense of being un-Constitutional, as being opposed to the American values, and as being anti-American, i.e. detrimental to the Americans as a people.

Paul defines himself as a strict constitutionalist and frequently invokes the Constitution as a reference point to legitimize his policies, hence adhering to the authorization legitimization strategy. In this sense Paul appeals to legitimacy both in the legal sense and as actions judged against the “norms or standards members of the system wish to deploy” (Fraser 1974:118). Paul invokes language that associates himself with the founding of America, defining himself and the audience as a part of a revolution and referencing a “revolutionary spirit that we have”. Paul constructs the identity of his “we” and “they” by reference to the founding of the Republic and its founding documents. Paul defines himself as a strict Constitutionalist and the belief in the Constitution and its values is, to him, the shared common characteristics binding his “we” together. Being a Constitutionalist, you automatically belong to this group with these values. Referring to the American heritage of myths, values and traditions embodied in the Constitution, Paul defines himself and his audience as part of this heritage. Paul constructs an “us” versus a “them”, where Paul and his followers are defined as those who believe in the values of liberty and freedom (and understand the true meaning of these values); whereas the ‘Other’ is the government, who will “violate the principles of liberty” if the people do not defend their rights. Paul’s distinction between “us” and “them” is based on appeals to *logos* in that he explains them by referring to economics and law (the Constitution), but Paul also appeals to *ethos* and *pathos*, describing the government as violating the inalienable rights of the individual. Paul presents the Constitution as the ideal legal document for guiding both American foreign policy and American domestic policy. Paul characterizes the Constitution as “the best”, implying that the document and the values reflected in the

Constitution are qualitatively better than other such documents. Paul's use of the Constitution for legitimizing policies invokes the commonplace of the Constitution as an infallible and superior foundation for a nation's political decision.

Paul states in his speech that "liberty should be our cause", and attaches the definition of liberty to notions of anti-statism, individual rights and the free market. Furthermore Paul explicitly refers to his understanding of "moral policy", hence defining "moral" as a quality pertaining to a certain type of policy. He indicates that people have strayed off the path outlined in the Constitution, stating that "all of the sudden people have lost respect for liberty, the understanding of liberty". In contrast to the current un-American foreign policy Paul wants to go back to the Constitution and have a pro-American foreign policy, again invoking the Constitution as the judge for what is to be characterized American. This is in line with Edwards (2011b) notion of a covenant with the founding documents; Paul constructs an image that current problems are rooted in a disregard for the Constitution, portraying "people" as having deviated from their covenant with the sacred documents of the founding of the US, and as such their prosperity is in jeopardy. Paul thus seeks to follow a foreign policy strictly based on the Constitution, which he sees as taking America back to its natural trajectory – using legal and commercial mechanisms solely to influence other states. Also when looking for ways to solve the problem of being attacked by terrorists as opposed to a nation, Paul invokes exemptionalism by looking to the Constitution and suggesting the reinstatement of the use of Letters of Marque and Reprisal. This would imply that American citizens should be exempt from international law should they invoke such letters, and reflects a thoroughly anti-statist view, in that it would authorize the use of force by private citizens on foreign territory, overruling the international norms of sovereignty of states. Paul bases this legitimization referencing to the American Constitution. It is thus legitimization through authorization.

Paul's foreign policy adheres mainly to the exemplarist branch of American Exceptionalism. It should be noted that Paul explicitly states that he is *not* an isolationist, wishing to deal with other nations through trade and commerce. He

emphasizes that he is an anti-interventionist, wanting to pull American troops out of their various campaigns around the world, wishing to cease what he calls being the policeman of the world. Paul's claim that liberty should be their cause however also implies a wish to spread the virtues of American ideology, which may be seen as a missionary notion. As such it should be noted that exemplary does not entail isolation, and Paul's exemplary stance incorporates some missionary notions. Moreover Paul believes that adhering to liberty is a "humanitarian argument", because the "other side, they do not produce", hence intertwining the notion of humanitarianism and economy. He explicitly states that "promoting the greatness of America" is a just cause, invoking the commonplace of American greatness as legitimization of his foreign policy. Paul's foreign policy is thus intertwined with economic policy, stating that it is through prosperity at home, achieved by adhering to the Constitution and the values upon which the nation was built, America can "set a good example others will want to emulate". Paul argues that maintaining the current interventionist policies is detrimental both to the American economy, costing "trillions of dollars" and American safety, by "making more enemies", thus seeking to legitimize his anti-interventionism through rationalization. Paul connects the American value of free trade to his foreign policy stance of anti-interventionism, equating free trade to staying out of other countries' internal affairs and conflicts. According to Paul, American foreign policy should focus on maintaining peaceful trade relations. This is based on every American's right to trade with anybody they like, based on the freedom to choose how they want to spend their money. As such free trade is also linked with individual rights.

## **7.2 Romney**

Romney's speech reflects a foreign policy that seeks to solidify the 21st century as an American century, predominantly appealing to the audience's *ethos* and *pathos*.

Romney's speech is heavily dominated by a dichotomous worldview of either/or scenarios. By defining his audience as adhering to a set of norms which he describes in indisputably favorable terms, and then establishing himself as part of the same group, Romney establishes the notion that he and the audience share the same American

identity, the same values and the same norms, and that these are qualitatively better than those pertaining to any other group – whichever this group may be. Relating his following arguments to this already established notion, these are continuously presented as expressing views that are shared by this established, normatively superior “we”. The effect is seductive, in that it engages the affections and presents Romney’s arguments as familiar notions and truths, implying that everyone else in the audience is in accordance with these same, shared beliefs as well. The mechanism in praxis blocks listeners from raising their hand, singling themselves out and asking for the statistical evidence and names of injured civilians in Afghanistan. This is an example of Romney evoking the symbol *American* to deflect criticism in line with Lippman (1922:151).

Romney establishes the identity of America, and hence his “we”, as the leader of the free world through incorporating the rhetoric of American exceptionalism and appealing to the constitutive effects of norms. This “we” is contrasted by both other nations, and the current administration as the Obama administration is characterized as failing to fulfill America’s destined mission and being detrimental to American strength and values. First, he introduces America and his “we” in benevolent terms as the undisputed leader of the free world, before constructing images of the US’ adversaries as violent savages with un-moralistic power politics through negative lexicalization as malign, tyrants, petty thugs, suicidal fanatics, evil, terrorists and violent authoritarians bludgeoning, threatening and crushing their neighbors and own peoples. Thus, Romney portrays America’s adversaries as having un-American or inferior values. He characterizes Cuba and Venezuela first as malign, then as anti-American. He applies the same mechanism to Iran, portraying it first as violent, threatening, irrational and filled with suicidal fanatics, then as anti-American. The effect is a coupling of these ideas generating the notion that being anti-American equals harboring evil, irrational, violent, threatening and fanatical qualities – in short, being un-American and even violating the norms and values held dear by America. This appeals to the audience’s sense of *ethos* and *pathos*, and the mechanism is in accordance with Kagan’s (2003:4) notion that conflicts are often defined in terms of good versus evil.



Portraying the *Other* as brutal and violent portrays them as morally reprehensive and appeals to the notion that America should intervene in order to save the peoples subjected to the violence of the *Other*. This is in line with the notion of America as having a moralistic foreign policy and the American exceptionalism view that America is more righteous than other countries, making the very idea of power politics “repellent” to American audiences. Reflecting the political principles that define American identity is what yields a morally legitimate foreign policy, according to Huntington (1982:19), whereas proposing a foreign policy opposing these principles would be regarded as being morally illegitimate. As Rice (1999) states, “there can be no absence of moral content in American foreign policy and furthermore the American people wouldn’t accept such an absence”.

Portraying America as superior in its state structure and principles conducting its foreign policy further augments the image of America as morally superior. In Romney’s own words, America “lends credibility and breeds faith in the ultimate success of any action”. Romney incorporates the legitimization strategy of moral evaluation through advocating the spread of democracy, freedom, prosperity and stability to what he defines as the morally, material bankrupt and malign socialisms of Chavez’ Venezuela and Castro’s Cuba. The argument depicts the U.S. as having noble intentions in Latin America, and reinforces the perception of the moral and utilitarian superiority of capitalism and democracy. Making moral judgments of the domestic regimes of other countries is one of the notions constituting what Leggold and McKeown (1995:369) refer to as the quintessence of American Exceptionalism. Romney thoroughly represents America as the chosen, and preferable, leader of the world.

Romney’s projection of foreign policy explicitly focuses on interventions and state building as well as the promotion of free markets and free trade in his vocation to spread democracy and freedom. Romney’s appeals to the ideas of open markets, representative government and respect for human rights is in line with the distinction

of America as qualitatively better influencing other states through commerce. This falls in line with Finnmore's (2009:65) belief in a synthesis between national security motives and normative concerns in American foreign policy. Romney establishes the identity of America, and hence his "we", as the leader of the free world and portrays the best way to spread American ideas as through interventionism, stating that United States must "apply the full spectrum of hard and soft power to influence events before they erupt into conflict", that the United States should organize "diplomatic and assistance efforts in the greater Middle East under one official with the authority and accountability necessary to train all our soft power resources on ensuring that the Arab Spring does not fade into a long winter" and not make any hasty decision by pulling out of Afghanistan. Instead Romney wishes to decide "the force level necessary to secure our gains and complete our mission successfully" without the intervention of politics. Romney's view of America as carrying the "eternal torch of decency, freedom and hope", and having a "duty [...] to hold it high enough that all the world can see its light" also invokes both the notion of the whole world looking to America, and that America is chosen as responsible to spread freedom around the world. Further seeking legitimacy through mythopoesis, Romney refers to the last century as "an American century" and holds that the 21st century must also be "American" in order to keep the world safe and avoid chaos. This evokes the American exceptionalist narrative of America as being founded on certain ideas and having a vocation to spread these ideas to the rest of the world. Romney furthermore states that an "eloquent justified surrender of world leadership is still surrender" thus identifying America's current position as of one of world leadership. It could thus be argued that Romney's rhetoric adheres to the missionary interventionist branch of American exceptionalism, incorporating some exemplarist elements into his foreign policy projection, as he also depicts America as having the duty to hold "the eternal torch of decency, freedom and hope [...] high enough that all the world can see its light".

Romney infers that spreading American values through American leadership will make the world a safer place. Reliable partnerships seeking common security and shared prosperity is the underlying motifs for America's mission to "promote open

markets, representative government and respect for human rights”, because, as Romney states, history has taught America that nations that share their values will be “reliable partners and stand with [them] in pursuit of common security and shared prosperity”. In Romney’s view, if America does not lead, someone else will, and this will be detrimental to America’s and the world’s safety. This adheres to the dichotomous world view inherent in American Exceptionalism, and mixes rationalization with the notion of America as a chosen people to gain legitimacy for Romney’s policies.

As the chosen leader of the world, Romney also invokes the idea that America should be exempt from international law and should police and govern the international relationships, and institutions, such as the UN. The UN is portrayed as incapable of performing its assigned tasks, and in Romney’s view, it is only America who can exert the proper leadership needed to make the UN perform its intended role. While indicating that America should cooperate with other nations, Romney holds that America should always “reserve the right to act alone to protect our vital national interests”. This reflects the exemptionalist notion that, while all other nations should adhere to the charters of the UN (under the guidance of the United States), the United States should be the one nation allowed to always reserve the right to act alone. He also states that he will “never, ever apologize for America”, invoking the notion that America should have a *carte blanche* to do whatever she choose, without having to apologize for it.

As outlined by Cruz (2000:280) rhetors typically seek to legitimize their policies through referencing historical inventions and particular perceptions of historic events. Romney, like Paul, also invokes the myth of the founding to legitimate his policies, stating that America is exceptional due to being “founded on a precious idea that was birthed in the American Revolution and propounded by our greatest statesmen in our fundamental documents”, throwing off the yoke of tyranny and establishing “a government, in Abraham Lincoln’s words “of the people, by the people, and for the people”. This intertextuality seeks legitimization through authorization and

mythopoesis in referring to historical persons of perceived authority and the genesis of the United States of America, in line with Gaskarth's (2006:328) idea that referencing great statesmen of the past in an effective way of gaining legitimacy.

## **8 Conclusion**

As shown in this thesis, both Paul and Romney draw on the idea of American exceptionalism to gain legitimacy for their contending views in their campaign speeches. The notions of the un-American *Other* and the superiority of American values, morals and institutions are invoked by both candidates in order to gain legitimacy for their respective moral policies. Where Paul takes an anti-interventionist stance and adheres strictly to the Constitution to define what exactly these values entail, Romney fervently applies the ideas of America as a chosen people qualitatively different to other peoples, with a destined vocation to spread its values through intervention and open markets to the rest of the world.

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